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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING FOR TWO CHINESE FAMILIES: A CASE STUDY

BY

© **WEI LI**

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND
RESEARCH IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF
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IN
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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled **Second Language Learning for Two Chinese Families: A Case Study** submitted by **Wei Li** in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to a very special person, my
best friend, Chuck Chamberlin, for whom no words can
describe how I am grateful in my entire study
and living in Canada. Without his support
and encouragement, this thesis could
not have been completed.

ABSTRACT

Many second language researchers now believe that learning a second language does not only result in the acquisition of the linguistic knowledge but also the learning of the culture and values which are represented by the language. Therefore, when we admit that linguistic variables will affect second language learning, we should also admit that social and psychological factors will have great impact on second language learning. In this study, the researcher investigated the experiences of two Chinese families learning English in Canada during the past years by using a qualitative research method. This study demonstrated the changes of these two families in Canada, such as social status, beliefs, values, social life, culture, jobs, etc, which showed tremendous influences on their second language learning. Five questions are discussed in this study: 1. What are the differences between the two Chinese families regarding their progress in English since they came to Canada? 2. What are the respondents' attitudes toward Canadian people and why? 3. What are the respondents' experiences to be a foreigner and how do these experiences affect their second language acquisition? 4. What is the relationship between motivation and second language acquisition? 5. What are the differences between adults and children of these two families regarding their English acquisition? It is evident in this study that learning a second language is a complicated process which involved many variables.

Based on the findings from this study, a proposed model of second language learning is made, which emphasizes the importance of individual social and psychological variables in the second language learning process. However, the individual variables will be influenced by factors such as their family, their ethnic group and their peers and friends. Most importantly, this model shows that second language acquisition is an active variable itself, which has an impact on the individual learners as well.

Some suggestions for second language learning, second language teaching and further research are made based on the findings from this study.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

During the past decade, the number of immigrants from South Asia to Canada has kept increasing. Meanwhile, a great number of Chinese students and visiting scholars came to Canada and United States to pursue their education in universities by doing their Masters, Ph.D degrees and post doctoral programs. Most of these students' spouses also came after education programs had begun.

One of the big issues confronting these people, i.e. immigrants, foreign students and their spouses, is the language - English, which can be considered as the essential tool for their life in this new world. Among these people, some of them might study English before coming to this new world, but some, probably most of them, never learned English before. Now English became a real challenge for them.

Based on observations during the past few years, it is interesting to find that these people acquire English as a second language in quite different ways. Although they are all in the same language environment, some pick up the language very quickly while some develop their second language very slowly and others do not even learn the language at all.

I have always been interested in observing how people acquire a second language because I am an ESL student myself and ESL is also the area of my study at the university. I studied English for many years in China, and then came to Canada as a foreign student. During the years of struggling with English both in China and Canada, I know, a lot, what it is like to be an ESL student and a foreigner; sometimes sweet, sometimes sour and sometimes bitter. In addition, I have had a lot of contact with the Chinese students and immigrants from other countries and I found that they also struggled with English. Their experiences of learning a second language were also full of joy, happiness, suffering and frustrations. Especially, after my wife and my daughter came to Canada, I saw them struggle through the long and complex process of acquiring English. I, personally, shared the sad and happy experiences of my wife while learning a second language and I also watched closely how my daughter acquired English which was a totally new language to her. The close observation of how they acquired English inspired me to know more about second language acquisition.

I still remember, clearly, the story of one person who has been in Canada for about two years. At the beginning, she attended different kinds of ESL classes and tried to learn some English. After a few months of hard struggling, her English still remained the same and not very much had been learned. Gradually, she began to loose interest in learning English. During the last few months, she attended some ESL classes again. It was surprising to find that she acquired English rapidly this time. Now she is more confident in talking to English native speakers although sometimes she still finds it very hard.

Why is this? Did this happen by accident? It is obvious that her language aptitude did not change and that ESL instruction was probably still the same, but the achievement was so much different from the second time to the first time.

There might be several answers for this. One might say that because she got more language input as she stayed in Canada longer, she learned faster. This may be true to some extent, but that probably is not the major reason. It is evident that some people have been in an English speaking country for many, many years, but they never pick up the language. Therefore, it is not accurate to assess someone's second language learning just by seeing how long they stay in that country.

To answer this question is not that easy. There are many factors which might affect second language acquisition. But one important factor is very clear, that is, this woman's motivation and attitude toward learning the second language had changed. It was noticed that at the beginning, she was just a visitor in Canada, but later on she became a landed-immigrant. Her status had been changed, and of course her motivation to learn English was different this time than in the beginning. She explained afterwards that at the beginning she always asked herself,"Why should I learn English?" and, "Do I have to learn English?". Although she went to some ESL classes, she did not have a driving purpose for learning English. In that situation, she was very passive and did not take it seriously. But now she felt that

English had become an important part of her life because if she wanted to stay in Canada forever, she had to learn it. She became enthusiastic and eager to learn English which resulted in an increased interest in communicating with other people in English. She once said that English was her first priority and that all other things had to be yielded to it.

Many theorists (Gardner, 1979, 1985; Lambert, 1963; Schumann, 1978; Krashen, 1982; Jakobovits, 1970; etc.) agree that second language acquisition not only depends on learner language aptitude, learning strategies, and materials, but also on the social factors, such as, the learner's social positions and economic, political cultural background and psychological factors, such as, motivation, attitude and other factors. Lambert (1967) pointed out:

> One would expect that if the student is to be successful in his attempts to learn another social group's language he must be both able and willing to adopt various aspects of behaviour, including verbal behaviour, which characterize members of the other linguistic-cultural group. The learner's ethnocentric tendencies and his attitudes toward the other group are believed to determine his success in learning the new language. His motivation to learn is thought to be determined by both his attitudes and by the type of orientation he has toward learning a second language (p. 102).

Actually, the importance of motivation in second language acquisition is not a new discovery. It has become a major research topic in second language acquisition during the last two decades. Theorists have realized that motivation is a very crucial issue in acquiring a second language. John Trafford

(1988) mentioned that in Great Britain all the modern language teachers faced an unenthusiastic response from their students and this fault lay less in teaching methodology than in students' attitudes and motivation. Trafford (1988) provided an analogy to show that language acquisition is very similar to giving up smoking. He said that every method used to stop smoking is useless if the smoker does not really want to stop. In other words, if the second language learner does not want to learn the language, he or she will have less success whatever his or her language aptitude is, or how much time he or she spends on it, or whatever the language instruction he or she gets.

Clearly, one assumption is that learning a second language is not just learning some phonology, lexicology and grammatical structures. Language learning is a process. It is intimately interwoven in social structures, personal development and choice of life style (Bain, 1987). In addition, it is also interwoven with social and psychological factors to learn that language.

Although during the past two decades a great number of studies have been done to see how motivation and other affective factors influence second language acquisition, the results from these studies are still very controversial. One of the reasons is that there are many limitations to all these studies. In their recent paper, Crookes and Schmidt (1991) pointed out that one indication of the current lack of research emphasis in this area is the fact that the discussion of motivation in these studies is curiously isolated from broader theoretical concerns. And they continued that current second language discussion on this topic lacked validity in that it is not well-grounded in the real world domain of the second language classroom, nor is it well-connected to other related educational research.

Since affective factors and motivation are very important in second language acquisition and because there is great debate on this issue by researchers, it seems necessary to examine this issue in a broader context by using a different research technique.

1.2 The Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this study was to investigate the manner in which the members of two Chinese families learned the English language and the difficulties encountered. In doing this information was gathered about their past and present English language competence level, with particular emphasis upon the driving force, incentive or motivation that has continued to sustain each person in the pursuit of a particular level of English language competence. The researcher became interested in social and psychological theories as he attempted to understand the phenomena of second language acquisition in his own family and that of others who had come to Canada. The theories about the influence of social and psychological factors on second language acquisition will be examined in this study but the topic has greater complexity than can be addressed within the limits defined.

This study was broken into four components.

First, this study examined, though not in detail, the driving forces and other affective factors which prompted the members of two Chinese families to learn a second language. This includes such factors as social and economic status, factors of culture shock and language shock, intent to stay in Canada, the social position of the learners' ethnic group, attitudes toward the target language group, and other factors.

Second, this study investigated how the change of citizenship status affected their second language acquisition. Since June 4th, 1989, the situation for these two families has been dramatically changed. At first, they stayed in Canada on the student and visitor visa. They were supposed to be in Canada temporarily. It was expected that when they finished their study, they would return to China. However, because of the political event of June 4th, 1989 in Tiananman Square in Beijing, China, they were allowed to apply for landed immigrant status in Canada. To them this was an unexpected opportunity in their life but it also carried with it the decision of being required to make Canada, a foreign country, their permanent home while possibly losing the right to return to families, friends and familiar surroundings.

Third, since the success of second language acquisition for each member in the two families investigated was so different, this study tried to examine and describe the motivations and other affective factors, in general, which made the second language acquisition of individuals a success or a failure, and why.

Fourth, this investigation examined the difference between adults and children regarding their second language acquisition and their second language learning motivation. It has already been indicated in one study (Svanes, 1987) that there might be differences between adults and children in terms of the relationship between integrative motivation and second language acquisition. This issue will be discussed in the review of the literature.

1.3 The Need for the Study

It is widely recognized that second language learning is a complicated process. In this process, not only linguistic knowledge is involved, but also other psychological and social variables, such as personal values, culture, personality, motivation and attitudes, that may play vitally important roles. Seliger (1988) said:

> Since language is used in social exchanges, the feelings, attitudes, and motivations of learners in relation to the target language (TL)[1] itself, to the speakers of the language, and to the culture will affect how learners respond to the input to which they are exposed. In other words, these affective variables will determine the rate and the degree of second language learning. (p.30)

---

[1] See the definition at the end of this chapter.

Among these variables, motivation and attitudes have become popular topics which have lead to extensive studies during the past few decades (Gardner & Lambert, 1959, 1972, 1981, 1983, 1985; Lalord & Gardner, 1985; Wong-Filmore, 1976; Lukmini, 1972; Lyczak, Fu & Ho, 1976, Wong, 1982, etc.). These studies were designed to examine the relationship between motivation or attitudes and second language achievement. Gardner (1972) divided motivation into two major aspects - integrative motivation and instrumental motivation (see the definitions at the end of this chapter). However, the results from these studies are very controversial. Some studies support the hypothesis that integrative motivation has a positive correlation with second language achievement, but other studies do not.

Why is there such confusion? Based upon the review of these studies, several reasons might be concluded. First, all these studies were done in the different language contexts where the target language (TL) was either a second language or a foreign language. Second, most of these studies examined this issue in a very limited context rather than in a broader and real context (Crookes & Schmidt, 1991). Third, the majority of these studies used quantitative research methods which might not be the best way to understand this complicated phenomenon which deals with human behaviour that is difficult to measure without fully understanding the person studied.

There were some studies which sought to discover the relationship between second language learning and other psychological and social variables, but those studies were not as extensive as the ones described above. Nevertheless, the question of how these affective variables might affect second language acquisition is still a mystery.

Schumann (1978b, 1986) also proposed that second language learners would acquire the second language to the degree they acculturate to the target language group. Although a group of studies have been done to examine the acculturation model by Schumann (1978b, 1978c), the conclusion is still controversial. One of the problems is that the learners' social and psychological (acculturation variables) might change during the course of the research. Schumann (1986) states,

> None of the research designs either used or proposed for testing the Acculturation Model are capable of handling this problem of history (p.389).

This implies that longitudinal study might be needed.

In order to obtain insight about how these affective variables affect second language learning, there is a need to conduct a study which uses a different research method called qualitative research. By using this method, the researcher is able to investigate this issue in a much broader and real life context. In this way, a better understanding may be possible about how these affective variables influence or affect learners when acquiring a second language. Backman (1976) in her study concluded:

> Measuring attitude and motivation with an attitude scale and attempting to relate them to progress of adults learning English as a second language met with no success. An alternative assessment technique - the interview - may provide a better way of measuring affective factors as they relate to second language learning. (p.114)

Why is the interview a better way to do this kind of research? Backman (1976) argued that most adult students were very responsive to a personal approach, they enjoyed talking about their problems and success in learning a language, they were open about their backgrounds and they desired to reminisce about life in their native country. However, by asking people just to give their thoughts on the questionnaire sheet, researchers might not be able to get rich and real information as readily as in the interview or through close observation of their real lives.

Another advantage of using qualitative research is that researchers can be provided an opportunity to follow the participants in the study for a longer period of time. This makes it possible for researchers to obtain a truer picture of the process of second language learning. As was mentioned earlier, second language learning is a complicated process, which does not happen over night. This process involves linguistic factors as well as psychological and social variables and some of these affective variables are not stable. The effects of these variables on second language learning for different individuals may change based upon the particular or specific situations of the individual learners. It is just like waves in the sea, sometimes high and sometimes low depending upon the strength of the wind. The qualitative research paradigm enables researchers to examine this process closely and reach insights of how exactly these affective variables influence learners to learn a second language.

All these factors indicate the necessity of this study to investigate the reality of second language acquisition in the lives of two Chinese families. Although it is impossible for this study to answer all the questions, it is at least a good start to examine this issue by using a completely different research method which few studies have used before in this area. It was hoped that some insights would be obtained which could lead to a better understanding of this complicated phenomenon of second language learning.

1.4 The Significance of the Study

Present theories and second language acquisition research indicate that second language acquisition not only involves the learning of linguistic codes and the discourse skills related to the when, where, and how to use the language codes but it also involves the influence of psychological and social affective factors. The important forces influencing second language acquisition are learners' social and psychological factors, such as why should I learn the second language? Gardner (1983) suggested that the learning of a second language was truly a social psychological experiment. He argued that this was true at two levels: that of the individual student and that of a cultural community. This suggests that more studies should be done to examine the relationships between motivation and second language acquisition. The present research combines these two levels by studying two Chinese families where a family can be viewed as a cultural community and the members can be treated as individuals. Furthermore, we should try to understand more about what driving forces facilitate second language acquisition, and which forces create barriers and why.

This study has significance in that it was designed to achieve personal insight into second language acquisition in a real social context and use a case study method seldom reported in most of the previous studies in this area. Through this research design, it was hoped that this issue would be examined in greater depth, enabling us to have a better understanding of this complicated process.

This study also has significance in that it provides some opportunity to see how motivation and other affective factors affect second language acquisition for adults as well as for children, which is not addressed by most of the previous studies. Through the discussion, we might understand better about the difference between children and adults in second language acquisition.

This study also has significance for second language teaching, as more and more new immigrants come to Canada. Every year, about 18000 immigrants come to Alberta alone. ESL programs are in high demand for these new comers and the government spends a lot of money to support these programs. Therefore, how to offer more effective ESL programs for these immigrants is a big issue. It is hoped that this study will help ESL teachers to better understand the process of second language acquisition and have some insight into the immigrants' concerns and problems. Through this, teachers may realize that second language teaching is not only the instruction of linguistic codes, but also the process by which we can understand learners' problems and help them solve the problem and encourage learners to build their confidence and facilitate their motivation to learn the second language.

This study has significance for second language learners as well. Through exploration of the influence of affective factors including motivation and their effects on second language acquisition, learners can be aware that these affective factors as well as motivation are very crucial components in their second language acquisition. This awareness will help them seek for better ways to acquire a second language.

1.5 Limitations

Although this study eliminates some of the limitations of the previous studies (Crookes & Schmidt, 1991), it has its own limitations.

First of all, this investigation looks at only two families and these two families cannot represent the whole population of immigrants. Therefore, the results from this study cannot be generalized but can only help us achieve more understanding of the complicated second language acquisition process in a particular context.

Also, it should be remembered that these two families came from China mainland. They came to Canada first as students and visitors, then became immigrants whereas many other immigrants come to Canada as landed immigrants intending to make it their new home.

Lastly, this study is done by a researcher who has similar experiences as these two families. Therefore, it should be realized that during the discussion, it was hard for the researcher to avoid putting his personal experience into the interpretation and discussion.

1.6 Definitions

Affective factors

- Affective factors refer to a group of factors which relate to emotion and feeling of human behaviours in second language acquisition, such as motivation, attitude, personality, anxiety, belief, value, etc.

Motivation - Motivation is a very broad term. A simple definition is provided by Keller (1983):"Motivation refers to the choices people make as to experiences or goals they will approach or avoid, and the degree of effort they will exert in that respect"(p.389).

Gardner and Lambert (1959, 1972) defined the motivation in second language acquisition as two kinds, one is integrative motivation and the other is instrumental motivation. In this study, the researcher sees motivation as the driving force which pushes learners to acquire the second language, the cause of the choice for them to learn or not to learn the second language, the efforts they put into learning the second language and the needs they feel for learning the second language.

Integrative motivation -

Integrative motivation can be defined as the motivation involved when learners wish to learn more about another cultural community because they are interested in it in an open-minded way, to the point of eventually being accepted as a member of that other group (Gardner, 1972).

Instrumental motivation -

Instrumental motivation can be defined as the motivational force when the purpose of language study reflects the more utilitarian value of linguistic achievement, such as getting ahead in one's occupation (Gardner, 1972).

Attitude - Attitudes are not innate but are formed as a result of an individual's contact with the environment which means that attitudes are learned. It is an evaluative reaction to some referent or attitude object, inferred on the basis of individual beliefs or opinions about the referent.

Second language acquisition -

Second language acquisition can be defined as the process of learning another langauge after the basics of the first language have been acquired (Dulay, Burt & Krashen, 1982). Some people use the term "acquisition" in order to distinguish it from second language "learning" because they see "acquisition" as unconscious learning while "learning" is a conscious act. In this study, the researcher treats acquisition as the whole process of second language learning.

Second language proficiency -

Second language proficiency in this study can be defined as second language ability with respect to the four basic language skills - listening, speaking, reading and writing - which are integrated with communicative competence in the real life situation.

Communicative competence -

Communicative competence was first defined by Hymes, (1972) in deliberate contrast to Chomsky's "linguistic competence". Communicative competence implies linguistic competence, such as knowledge of grammatical rules, but its main focus is on the intuitive grasp of social and cultural rules, for example, knowing when it is appropriate to open a conversation and how, what topics are to be used, to whom and in which situations, and how such speech acts as greetings, compliments, apologies, invitations and compliments are to be given, interpreted and responded to (Wolfson, 1983). In this study, communicative competence is seen as the learners' second language ability, oral and written, to communicate effectively and efficiently in the real social world.

The Spolsky Identity Scale -

This test consists of about 30 adjectives. Subjects are asked how well these adjectives describe, (1) themselves, (2) their ideal selves, (3) people whose native language is the same as theirs, and (4) native speakers of the second language (L2) in question. Then various analyses can be applied to the scores obtained (Au, 1991).

The Matched-Guise Technique -

This technique requires bilinguals to read onto a tape recorder passages both in their native language and their second language (L2). Subjects, upon listening to these passages, are asked to rate speakers on a number of personality traits without knowing that the speakers have in fact been the same speakers in two guises. Then a differential score for each subject is obtained by subtracting the subject's average ratings of the L2 guises from those of the native guises. According to the favorability ratings given to the traits, the differential score would indicate how favourably a subject viewed the L2 community. Correlating the differential scores with scores of an L2 achievement measure reflects the relationship between attitude toward the L2 community and the L2 achievement.

English as a second language (ESL) -

For this study, English was learned as a second language after Chinese was acquired in the native culture, and in the setting where English is the native language.

English as a foreign language (EFL) -

In this situation, English is learned in the setting where it is not the native language, for example, in China where the native langauge is Mandarin or in France where French is the native language.

Target language (TL) -

Target language usually refers to the second language or foreign language which learners want to learn after they have acquired their native language. In this study, the target language is English which the two family members tried to learn after they came to Canada.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the theoretical framework for this study is presented. The purpose of this study was to examine the most important variables which influenced the two Chinese families in acquiring a second language in an informal language environment in Canada. The theory of acculturation in second language acquisition (Schumann, 1978a, 1978b, 1978c, 1986), which is based on the disciplines of sociology and psychology, provides a theoretical perspective which helps to explain how acculturation occurs and relates to second language acquisition. The view of this theory is that acculturation is an important aspect of second language acquisition because language is one of the most observable expressions of culture and because in second language settings the acquisition of a new language is seen as tied to the way in which the learner's community and the target language community view each other (Ellis, 1985). Brown (1987) also emphasizes the importance of culture in second language learning. He pointed out that second language learning is often second culture learning. In terms of the different functions of culture and language, Brown states that culture is a deeply ingrained part of the very fibre of our being, but language (the means for communication among members of a culture) is the most visible and available expression of that culture. Accommodation theory will also be considered as an important aspect of the theoretical framework for this study because it shares some common premises with the acculturation theory, but also differs in a number ways (Ellis, 1985).

2.2 The Acculturation Model

There is more than one definition of acculturation. Yet these differences have many features in common. This review, while not exhaustive, exposes some important features while trying to show some subtle differences addressed by a few authors. Schumann (1978a) defines acculturation as the social and psychological integration of the learner within the target language group.

Schumann (1978c) says that:

> ... second language acquisition is just one aspect of acculturation and the degree to which a learner acculturates to the target language group will control the degree to which he acquires the second language (p.34).

Brown (1980) defines acculturation as the process of becoming adapted to a new culture. While Brown does not specifically include language acquisition in the definition, it is assumed as part of adaptation.

Phinney, Chavira and Williamson (1992) define acculturation in a general sense as the changes that occur as a result of continuous contact between two distinct cultures. Although Phinney and her colleagues did not explain what these changes are, it is clear that the language would be one major component in those changes.

Schumann (1978a, 1978b, 1978c) suggests in his model that both acculturation and second language acquisition are determined by social and psychological distances which exist between second language learners and target language culture. The social distance is the result of a number of factors which affect the learner as a member of a social group in contact with the target language group, and the psychological distance is the result of various affective factors which concern the learner as an individual. Schumann (1978a, 1978b, 1978c, 1986) lists the social factors and affective (psychological) factors which determine social and psychological distance (Table One). Ellis (1985) states that:

> Social and psychological distance influence SLA (second language acquisition) by determining the amount of contact with the target language that the learner experiences, and also the degree to which the learner is open to that input which is available (p. 252).

TABLE ONE*

Social and Affective Factors Influencing SLA

Social Factors:	Dominance; Nondominance; Subordination; Assimilation; Adaptation; Preservation; Enclosure; Cohesiveness; Size; Congruence; Attitudes; Intended length of residence in TL area.
Affective Factors:	Language shock; Culture shock; motivation; Ego-permeability.

* From Schumann, 1986 (p.379)

Although Schumann (1986) realizes that there are some other factors which can influence second language acquisition, such as personality, cognitive and biological aptitude, instructional factors, he suggests that social and affective factors cluster into a single variable called acculturation which is a major causal variable in second language acquisition.

The first group of social factors involves the social dominance patterns. If the second language learning (2LL) group is politically, culturally, technically or economically superior to the target language group, which is not the case in this study, Schumann (1978a, 1978b, 1978c, 1986) proposes that the 2LL group will tend not to learn the target language. But if the 2LL group is inferior to the target language, there is also a social distance between these two groups and the result is that the second language learners will tend to resist learning the target language. A good language learning situation exists when the 2LL group and the target language group are roughly equal in terms of political, cultural, technical and economical status. In this situation, it is believed that second language acquisition will be enhanced.

The second group of social factors includes three integration strategies. They are assimilation, preservation and adaptation.

1. Assimilation occurs when the second language learners give up their own life style and values and adopt those of the

target language group. If this is the case, contact between the 2LL group and the target language group will be maximized and then second language acquisition will be enhanced.

2. Preservation indicates that the 2LL group maintains its own life style and values and rejects those of the target language group. This situation creates a social distance between these two groups and second language acquisition will not likely happen.
3. Adaptation is the third integration strategy. This occurs when the 2LL group adapts to the life style and values of the target language group, but still maintains its own life style and values. In this situation, Schumann (1986) argues that this particular integration strategy yields varying degrees of contact between the two groups and thus varying degrees of acquisition of second language.

Enclosure is another social factor which affects second language acquisition. This factor refers to the degrees to which the 2LL group and the target language group share the same public facilities, such as churches, schools, clubs or recreation centres. Schumann (1986) points out:

> If the two groups share these social constructs then enclosure is said to be low, contact between the two groups is enhanced and the acquisition of the target language by the 2LL group is facilitated. However, if the two groups have different churches, schools, clubs, recreational facilities, crafts, professions and trades then enclosure is said to be high, contact between the two groups is limited and opportunities for acquisition of the target language is reduced (p. 381).

The fourth group of social factors is cohesiveness and size. Cohesiveness refers to the separation from the target language group and size refers to the population of the 2LL group. If the 2LL group is cohesive and also large it is not a good second language learning situation because the contact will be more within the 2LL group rather than with the target language group and will thus reduce the opportunities for the acquisition of the target language. For instance, if a large group of Chinese people came to Canada and established a large group within a particular city where they primarily associated only with each other, they would not likely learn English as readily as if there were fewer of them forced to merge with English language speakers.

The fifth factor involved in second language acquisition is congruence which refers to the similarity between the culture of the target language group and the 2LL group. It is believed that if the two cultures are similar then social contact is potentially more likely and second language acquisition may be facilitated. An example is the relative ease for the people from France or Spain to learn English compared to those from Asia.

Another social factor is attitude. Schumann (1978a, 1978b, 1978c, 1986) proposes that it is a good second language learning situation if the 2LL group and the target language group have positive attitudes toward each other. Otherwise the second language learning is unlikely to occur. One example is that during the Chinese Cultural Revolution, capitalist systems in the west were viewed as an evil by the Chinese Communist Party. Therefore, everything from the west was banned, including the language. At that time, almost all of the English teachers in China lost their jobs and they had to do something else. Those who knew some English was considered as dangerous people because they might be spies and traitors. The situation has changed dramatically since China opened her door to the west. After the end of "left wind" in China, the attitudes towards the west have been changed. There are many policies in China which follow the suit of the west. English has become the most popular language in China which has never before happened in Chinese history. Phinney (1992) emphasizes the importance of attitudes in acculturation. She quotes from Berry (1992):

> A significant factor influencing the psychological consequences of acculturation is likely to be the attitudes people have about how the dominant and minority groups should relate to each other in the larger society (Berry, Kim, Power, Young & Bujaki, 1989) (p.300).

The final social factor is the amount of time the second language learners intend to stay in the target language area. It is proposed in this model that if the 2LL individuals plan to stay in the target language area for a long time then they are likely to develop more extensive contacts with the target language group. As a result, second language acquisition will be enhanced.

There is another group of factors which determines the psychological distance. Some people believe that these affective factors are more important than the social factors in second language acquisition. This group of factors include language shock, culture shock, motivation and ego-permeability as shown in Table One.

Language shock refers to the learners' fear and lack of confidence in using a new language. Stengal (1939) points out that when learners attempt to speak a second language they often fear that they will appear foolish. In discussing language shock with children and adults, Stengal uses an analogy to describe some differences to show that learning a second language is similar to wearing fancy clothes. Stengal (1939) believes:

> The adult learner may want to wear his fancy clothes, but he also fears criticism and ridicule. The children, however, see language as a method of play and finds communication a source of pleasure. Thus, he doesn't fear his fancy clothes; he enjoys wearing them (Schumann, 1986, p.382).

Here both Stengal and Schumann point out that children are usually more willing than adults to take risks when they use a new language. Children are less worried about making mistakes and therefore are willing to try new words even if they are used incorrectly. In this case, children might have more advantages than adults.

The second affective factor is culture shock. Brown (1987) explains that culture shock refers to a phenomena ranging from mild irritability to deep psychological panic and crisis. It is associated with feelings in the learner of estrangement, anger, hostility, indecision, frustration, unhappiness, sadness, loneliness, homesickness and even physical illness.

Peter Adler (1972) also describes culture shock in more technical psychological terms:

> Culture shock, then, is thought to be a form of anxiety that results from the loss of commonly perceived and understood signs and symbols of social intercourse. The individual undergoing culture shock reflects this anxiety and nervousness with cultural differences through any number of defense mechanisms: repression, regression, isolation and rejection. These defensive attitudes speak, in behavioral terms, of a basic underlying insecurity which may encompass loneliness, anger, frustration and self-questioning of competence. With the familiar props, cues, and clues of cultural understanding removed, the individual becomes disoriented, afraid of, and alienated from the things that he knows and understands (p.8).

Schumann (1978a, 1978b, 1978c, 1986) defines culture shock as anxiety resulting from the disorientation encountered upon entering a new culture. Schumann (1986) argues that the result of this culture shock can produce a powerful syndrome of rejection which diverts energy and attention from second language learning. However, it is possible that the second language learner may reject himself, his own culture, the organization for which he is working and the people of the host country. If this is the case, the second language learner is still unlikely to make any effort to acquire the target language. It is clear in this theory that those people experiencing less cultural shock will acquire the target language most efficiently.

Brown (1987) proposes that second language learners might have to go through four steps before they can become more comfortable in the new culture. Brown (1987) says:

> The first stage is the period of excitement and euphoria over the newness of the surroundings. The second stage - cultural shock - emerges as individuals feel the intrusion of more and more cultural differences into their own images of self and security. In this stage individuals rely on and seek out the support of their fellow countrymen in the second culture, taking solace in complaining about local customs and conditions, seeking escape from their predicament. The third stage is one of gradual, and at first tentative and vacillating, recovery. This stage is typified by what Larson and Smalley (1972) call culture stress: some problems of acculturation are solved while other problems continue for some time. But general progress is made, slowly but surely, as individuals begin to accept the difference in thinking and feeling that surround them, slowly becoming more empathic with other persons in the second culture. The fourth stage represents near or full recovery, either assimilation or adaption, acceptance of the new culture and self-confidence in the "new" person that has developed in this culture (p.129).

These four stages can be seen as the procedure that second language learners will go through in order to overcome cultural shock and reach a successful acculturation in the new world.

Motivation is another affective factor in second language acquisition. Schumann (1986) points out that motivation involves the learners' reasons for attempting to acquire the target language. Gardner and Lambert, 1972) define motivation as two kinds, one is called "Integrative Motivation" and the other is "Instrumental Motivation". Integrative motivation refers to the positive attitude toward the target language group and the potential for integrating into that group, or at the very least an interest in meeting and interacting with members of the target language group. Instrumental motivation involves more functional reasons for learning a second language, for example, to get a promotion or to pass a required examination. When considering what is a motivated learner, Gardner (1983) argues that:

> Motivation in this context, it should emphasized, is conceived as comprising three components, effort to achieve the goal, desire to achieve the goal and positive affect toward the goal. Such a tripartite conceptualisation seems necessary to reflect adequately the notion of the motivated individual (p.122).

In the "Social-Education Model of Second Language Acquisition" proposed by Gardner and his colleagues (1979, 1980, 1985), it is hypothesized that integrative motivation is superior to instrumental motivation for acquiring a second language and it partially determines the success of second language acquisition. Schumann (1986) states:

> It has generally been thought that integrative motivation is the more powerful of the two (integrative motivation and instrumental motivation) because it implies a desire to integrate with speakers of the target language. A learner with an instrumental motivation would be expected to integrate, and hence acquire a second language, only to the point where his instrumental goals were satisfied (p.383).

However, recent research seems to indicate that the motivation orientation associated with proficiency in learning a second language is somewhat controversial. Generally speaking, there are three kinds of results. The first group of studies (Gardner & Lambert, 1959; Gardner, 1960; Gardner and Lambert, 1972; Smythe, Stennett & Freenstra, 1972; Tucker, Hamayan & Genesee, 1976; etc.) shows positive relationships between the components of integrative motivation and second language proficiency. The second group of studies (Gardner, Smythe & Clement, 1979; Clement, Gardner & Smythe, 1980; Lukmani, 1972; Lyczak, Fu & Ho, 1976; Muchnick & Wolfe, 1982, Wong, 1982; etc.)

claims that no relationships were observed. The last group of studies (Au, 1984; Lambert, Barik & Tunstall, 1963; Gardner & Lambert, 1972, the Connecticut study and the Maine study; Gardner, Smythe & Clement, 1979; etc.) have yielded a negative relationship between some components of integrative motivation and second language proficiency.

One might interpret from the literature that two major reasons account for such contradictory results; first, the measurement of the types of motivation and second, research settings where the target language plays different social roles. An example of the later would be the difference in the role of English in Canada and in China. Therefore, when considering motivation as an important factor in second language acquisition, we have to realize that motivation is a complex construct which interacts with other social variables and therefore is not easily isolated.

The last affective factor in this model is ego-permeability. In attempting to explain the ability of some people to acquire native-like pronunciation in a second language, Guiora (1972) develops the notion of language ego which is seen as parallel to body ego. Schumann (1978b) argues that:

> In the course of general ego development the child acquires body ego by which he becomes aware of the limits of his physical being and learns to distinguish himself from the object world around him. In a similar fashion, in the course of general ego development, the child acquires a sense of the boundaries of his language. The sounds, words, syntax and morphology of his language become objectified and develop firm outlines and boundaries (p.33).

It is believed that in the early stage of language development, language ego boundaries are permeable, but later they become fixed and rigid. However, the ego-permeability can be induced by lowering the learner's level of inhibition. One study by Schumann, Holroyd, Campbell and Ward (1978) shows the evidence that the pronunciation of subjects (second language learners) who were deeply hypnotised improved to a greater degree than that of subjects who were less deeply hypnotised. Another example is the study done by Guiora, Beit-Hallahmi, Brannon, Dull and Scovel (1972). In this study it was found that the second language learners who were given one to one-and-a-half ounces of alcohol had better pronunciation than those who were given no alcohol or two-or-three ounces of alcohol. Thus it is suggested that successful second language acquisition may depend on the learner's level of disinhibition and thus openness to target language input.

In the last decade, more studies have been done to examine the area of acculturation. In one recently reported study of "Cultural and social assimilation of Israeli immigrants in the United States", Rosenthal and Auerbach (1992) examined the differential patterns of cultural and social assimilation of Israeli immigrants in the United States based on testing two hypotheses: first, among Israeli immigrants, those with high socioeconomic status achieve a higher degree of cultural assimilation than those with low socioeconomic status; and second, social assimilation is not related to socioeconomic status among Israeli immigrants. Cultural assimilation is different from social assimilation. Gordon (1964) states that cultural assimilation is only the first step in the process of assimilation while the final step is social-structural assimilation which is the large scale entrance into cliques, clubs, institutions and organizations of the host society on the primary group level. English proficiency in this study (fluency in speaking, reading and writing) is treated as one of the variables of cultural assimilation. This study concludes that Israeli immigrants with a higher degree of socioeconomic status reported a higher degree of fluency in the English language, ability to read printed material, and exposure to American culture than those who had a lower socioeconomic status, but there was no significant relationship between socioeconomic status and social assimilation. It is also concluded in this study that younger respondents had higher levels of assimilation and longer length of stay was related to higher levels of assimilation.

This study (Rosenthal & Auerbach, 1992) suggests that socioeconomic status, age and length of stay are also some factors of acculturation which have an influence on second language acquisition.

In another recent study, Berry and his colleagues (1989) propose a model of acculturation in which four possible ways are suggested for ethnic group members to participate in a culturally diverse society. These four ways are assimilation, integration, separation and marginality. Assimilation is the outcome when ethnic group members choose to identify solely with the culture of the dominant society and to relinquish all ties to their ethnic culture. Integration is characterized by strong identification and involvement with both the dominant society's culture and the traditional ethnic culture. Separation involves exclusive focus on the cultural values and practices of the ethnic group and little or no interaction with the dominant society. Marginality is defined by the absence or loss of one's culture of origin and the lack of involvement with the dominant society (Phinney, et al., 1992). This model does not mention how these four possible ways influence second language acquisition, but it emphasizes the importance of contact between the ethnic group and the dominant group in the process of acculturation. Schumann might argue that the different types of contacts might have impact on second language acquisition.

In summary, the acculturation theory provides the theoretical background to understand the complex phenomenon of second language acquisition in a natural context. It offers a perspective of second language acquisition which encompasses both sociological and psychological explanations.

2.3 The Accommodation Theory

The accommodation theory was developed by Giles and Byrne

(1982). As mentioned above, the accommodation theory shares some similar concerns with the acculturation theory, but there are also some differences between these two theories. Ellis (1985) points out:

> Both (the accommodation theory and the acculturation theory) seek the answer in the relationships that hold between the learner's social group (termed the "ingroup") and the target language community (termed the "outgroup"). However, whereas Schumann explains these relationships in terms of variables that create actual social distance, Giles does so in terms of perceived social distance (p.256).

Giles believes that it is how the ingroup defines itself in relation to the outgroup that is important for second language acquisition. Giles sees intergroup relationships as subject to constant negotiation during the course of each interaction. Therefore, for Giles, intergroup relationships are dynamic and fluctuate in accordance with the shifting views of identity held by each group vis-a-vis the other.

The accommodation theory (Giles & Byrne) agrees with Gardner (1979) that motivation is the primary determinant of second language proficiency which is governed by a number of key variables (Ellis, 1985):

1. How second language learners see themselves as members of a specific ingroup, separate from the outgroup;
2. Whether second language learners make favourable or unfavourable comparisons between their own ingroup and the outgroup;
3. Whether second language learners see their own ingroup as

holding a low or high status and as sharing or excluded from the institutional power;

4. Whether second language learners see their ingroup as culturally and linguistically separate from the outgroup or as culturally and linguistically related; and
5. The degree to which second language learners identify and perceive themselves as having status with other social categories, such as, occupational, religious, and gender.

(Adapted from Ellis, 1985, p.256)

According to these key variables, Giles and Byrne (1982) propose a core framework of what can be termed the "Intergroup Theory of Second Language Acquisition", which is based on enthnolinguistic identity principles in an attempt to refine the accommodation theory. In this intergroup theory of second language acquisition, the learners are sorted into two subgroups, A and B based on the following propositions.

> a. ingroup identification is weak and/or L1 is not a salient dimension of ethnic group membership;
>
> b. quiescent inter-ethnic comparisons exist (e.g., no awareness of cognitive alternatives to inferiority);
>
> c. perceived ingroup vitality is low;
>
> d. perceived ingroup boundaries are soft and open;
>
> e. strong identification exists with many other social categories, each of which provides adequate group identities and a satisfactory intra-group status. (Beebe, 1988, p.67)

If second language learners are in favour of the above propositions, they are in Subgroup B, otherwise they are in

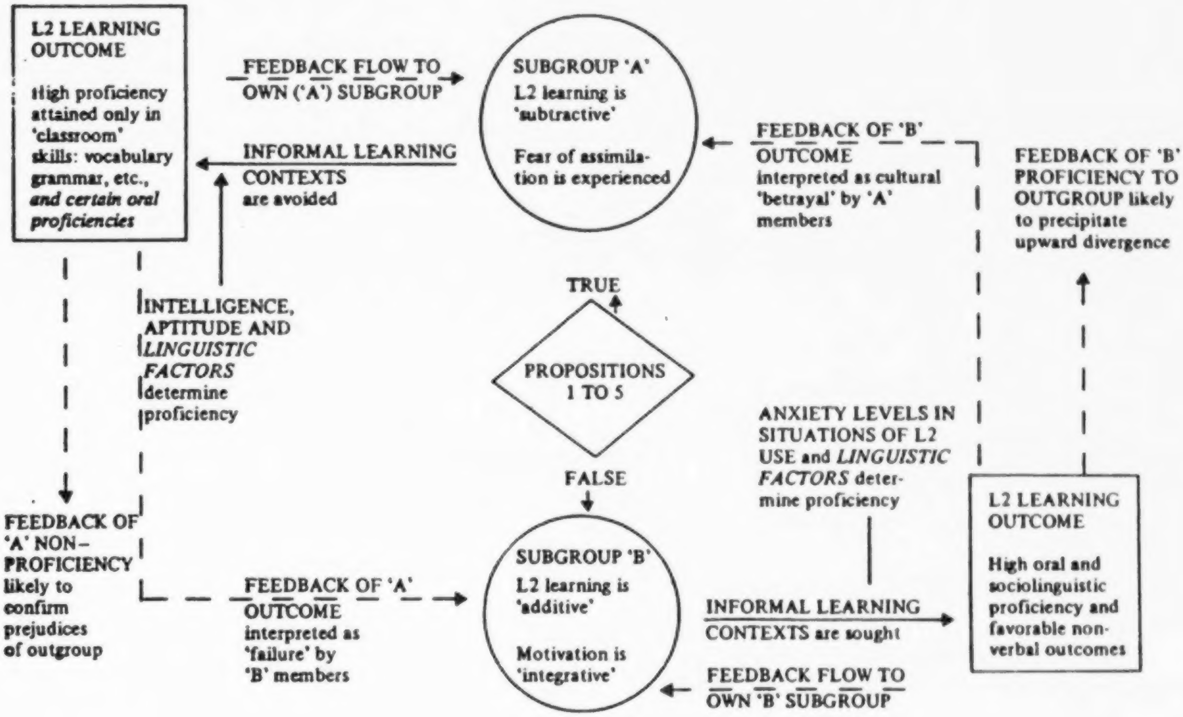
Subgroup A.

For Subgroup A learners, learning a second language would be "subtractive" because the group members identify strongly with each other and perceive the social cost to their group to be high even if they have economic and political advantages. Their motivational tendency would be "fear of assimilation". Also Subgroup A individuals would not seek informal acquisition contexts and would be likely to attain second language proficiency only in formal classroom contexts where vocabulary and grammar would emphasize individual differences in learners' intelligence and aptitude more than anxiety about the speaking situation. Therefore, Subgroup A is not likely to achieve native-like proficiency in second language.

For Subgroup B members, second language learning would be "additive" and their motivational tendency "integrative". They would take advantage of available informal acquisition contexts to further their second language skills and would, besides formal knowledge, gain high oral competence, sociolinguistic mastery and accommodative flexibility in the second language as well as achieve favourable nonlinguistic outcomes in the form of positive attitudes toward the outgroup and cultural enrichment. As a result, Subgroup B is more likely to approach native-like proficiency in a second language. The following figure from Giles and Byrne (1984) illustrates the detailed relationship of this model.

FIGURE ONE*

The Intergroup Theory of Second Language Acquisition


L2 LEARNING OUTCOME
High proficiency attained only in 'classroom' skills: vocabulary grammar, etc., and certain oral proficiencies
FEEDBACK FLOW TO OWN ('A') SUBGROUP
INFORMAL LEARNING CONTEXTS are avoided
SUBGROUP 'A'
L2 learning is 'subtractive'
Fear of assimilation is experienced
FEEDBACK OF 'B' OUTCOME interpreted as cultural 'betrayal' by 'A' members
FEEDBACK OF 'B' PROFICIENCY TO OUTGROUP likely to precipitate upward divergence
INTELLIGENCE, APTITUDE AND LINGUISTIC FACTORS determine proficiency
TRUE
PROPOSITIONS 1 TO 5
FALSE
ANXIETY LEVELS IN SITUATIONS OF L2 USE and LINGUISTIC FACTORS determine proficiency
FEEDBACK OF 'A' NON-PROFICIENCY likely to confirm prejudices of outgroup
FEEDBACK OF 'A' OUTCOME interpreted as 'failure' by 'B' members
SUBGROUP 'B'
L2 learning is 'additive'
Motivation is 'integrative'
INFORMAL LEARNING CONTEXTS are sought
FEEDBACK FLOW TO OWN 'B' SUBGROUP
L2 LEARNING OUTCOME
High oral and sociolinguistic proficiency and favorable non-verbal outcomes

* From Beebe & Giles, 1984

2.4 Summary

Both the acculturation theory and the accommodation theory provide explanations of the influence of some social and psychological factors on second language acquisition. Both theories share some common premises, for example, both seek the answer in the relationships that hold between the learner's social group and the target language group (Ellis, 1985), and both theories view motivation as central to determining success in second language acquisition. But there are also some differences between them. One of the major difference is that acculturation theory explains these relationships in terms of variables that create actual social distances, while accommodation theory does so in terms of perceived social distances. Specifically, Giles (1982) argues that it is how the intergroup defines itself in relationship to the outgroup (target language group) that is important for second language acquisition.

We also have to realize that both theories put more emphasis on learners as a group to acquire a second language. In reality, individuals within their ethic group will be different during the process of second language acquisition. Berry and his associates (1986) points out:

> The crucial point is that not every person in the acculturating group will necessarily enter into the acculturation process in the same way or to the same degree (p.296).

Therefore, when we consider how acculturation influences second language acquisition as a group, it is also necessary to look at other factors which might have an impact on acculturation, such as age, sex, family position, or personal ability.

Although these two theories have their limitations, both theories are useful in helping to identify some of the possible reasons for the apparent limitations on second language learning that some second language learners experience (Pipe, 1993). Both theories are concerned to some degree with learners' characteristics and with situational factors. In this study, these two theories are used as the basic theoretical framework to understand the second language acquisition of two Chinese families in an Canadian setting.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Introduction

The intent of the present study was to investigate the two Chinese families to see how they acquired English as their second language in their real life contexts. Since many factors would be involved in the process of acquiring a second language, only a few were focused on in this study, such as past and present English proficiency, cultural differences, experiences of being a foreigner and how this influenced the desire to learn English, personality factors, age difference factors and a few other factors which turned out to be important in learning English as a second language for these two families.

A case study method was used for the present study. There are several reasons for selecting this research methodology.

The most important reason is that through an overview of the research literature, it has been found that most of the studies in this area are based on an experimental design. Therefore, it seems important to examine this area by using a different research method and therefore provide another perspective.

Secondly, results from the empirical studies are somewhat controversial, leading the researcher to believe that a qualitative study was needed that would seek to determine how second language learners immersed in a new social context viewed their experience. Skehan (1989) reviewed the role of motivation on second language learning and pointed out:

> This implies, above all, a move towards longitudinal and ethnographic methods in which the progress of a single group of learners is monitored closely over time.(p. 67)

While this study is not longitudinal in the true sense, it does require the learners to reflect upon the learning of the second language which took an extended amount of time. Also the researcher expected to conduct interviews with the respondents for a long time (about a year and a half) during which time language learning was in progress and there was considerable stimulation to gain as much insight into the learning process as possible.

Recently, Crookes and Schmdit (1991) re-evaluated much of the research and stressed that case studies offered a way of identifying situations in which motivation was intuitively recognized as being a forceful agent.

Thirdly, by using this naturalistic study, it enabled the researcher to have a closer observation of certain groups of people for a longer period of time, thus providing insight into second language acquisition. It also enabled the researcher to obtain the information from the real social contexts, and therefore get a whole picture of the issue.

The reports of investigations carried out in this paradigm often take the form of case studies or "portrayals" (Stake, 1975). This type of research enables researchers to investigate or observe through real life experiences in natural settings. Based on the lived experiences of the participants, this study can provide a different point from which to view the effects of motivation on second language acquisition.

The case study has become more and more popular as a research method in dealing with human affairs. Stake (1978) states:

> It is widely believed that case studies are useful in the study of human affairs because they are down-to-earth and attention-holding but that they are not a suitable basis for generalization. (p.5)

Stake further claims:

> Case studies are likely to continue to be popular because of their style and to be useful for exploration for those who search for explanatory laws. And, moreover, because of the universality and importance of experiential understanding, and because of their comparability with such understanding, case studies can be expected to continue to have an epistemological advantage over other inquiry methods as a basis for naturalistic generalization. (p.7)

The use of such a research paradigm has some advantages. First, it allows the researcher to study lived experiences of this phenomena in a much broader context. Second, it enables the researcher not only to observe what types of subjects' motivation affect their second language learning and what types of other variables influence their motivation but also to gain an interpretation of their lived experiences. Third, through the case study, the researcher will be able to examine subjects learning a second language in real social contexts so that it becomes possible to achieve deeper insight.

3.2 Research Theory Framework

Although the researcher selected a naturalistic study, it does not mean that naturalistic research has superiority over rationalistic research. Actually, each has its legitimate place in empirical inquiry (Scott, 1987). The selection of any research paradigm should be made on the appropriateness of certain key assumptions to the problem being investigated (Guba, 1981). Table 2 shows the comparison of key assumptions in the rationalistic and naturalistic paradigms.

TABLE TWO*

A Comparison of Key Assumptions
In the Rationalistic and Naturalistic Paradigms*

Assumptions	Rationalistic	Naturalistic
The Nature of Reality	Focus on single Variables	Multiple Realities Exist
The Nature of the Inquirer/Object Relationship	Independence	Acknowledges Interdependence
The nature of True Statements	Generalizations possible	Working Hypotheses Possible
Methods	Preference for quantitative data	Preference for qualitative data
Quality Criterion	Rigor	Relevance
Source of Theory	Deductive	Inductive or "Grounded"
Knowledge Types Used	Propositional	Tacit and Propositional
Instruments	Tests, Machines, etc,(Measurable)	Researcher

(To be continued)

Design	Advance design	Emergent Design
Setting	Controlled	Natural, Uncontrolled

* From Scott (1987)

Guba and Lincoln (1989) suggest that four major concerns relating to trustworthiness of the data have evolved.

Truth Value

Truth value is the first aspect of trustworthiness. It deals with the question of how one can establish confidence in the "truth" of the findings of a particular inquiry for the subjects (respondents). Within the rationalistic paradigm, internal validity is logically determined by demonstrating verisimilitude between the data of an inquiry and the phenomena that those data represent (Guba, 1981). However, naturalistic inquiry suggests that in establishing truth value, it is most important to test the credibility of the findings and interpretations with the various sources (audiences or groups) from which data were drawn. One of the best ways to do this is the use of "member checks", that is, testing the data with members of the relevant data source groups.

Applicability

Applicability is the second aspect of trustworthiness, which raises the question of how one can determine the degree to which the findings of a particular inquiry may have applicability in another context or with other subjects. Within the rationalistic paradigm, applicability refers to external validity or generalizability. It requires that the inquiry should be conducted in ways that make chronological and situational variations irrelevant to the findings. For the naturalist, the concept of applicability or generalizability is transferability (Guba, 1981). The naturalist does not attempt to form generalizations that will hold at all times and in all places, but to form working hypotheses that may be transferred from one context to another depending upon the degree of "fit" between the contexts.

Consistency

Consistency is the third aspect of trustworthiness. It attempts to answer the question of how one can determine whether the findings of an inquiry would be consistently repeated if the inquiry were replicated with the same subjects in the same context. Within the rationalistic paradigm, concern over consistency stems from the fact that instruments must produce stable results if those results are to be meaningful and reliable. Since naturalists believe that it is impossible to repeat a study under identical circumstances, they interpret consistency as dependability, a concept that embraces elements both of the stability implied by the rationalistic term reliable and of the track-ability required by explainable changes in instrumentation.

Neutrality

Neutrality is commonly termed objectivity within the rationalistic paradigm, which deals with the question of how one can establish the degree to which the findings of an inquiry are a function solely of subjects (respondents) and conditions of the inquiry and not the biases, motivations, interests, perspectives, etc., of the inquirer. For rationalists, objectivity is presumably guaranteed by methodology; if the methods are explicated, open to public scrutiny, replicable, and at least one step removed from direct investigator-subject contact, then objectivity is assured, that is, the biases of the investigator are effectively screened out (Guba, 1981). However, naturalists (Wilson, 1977) believe that human actions have more meaning than just the concrete facts of who, what, where, and when that an outsider can observe; they have more meanings than even the responses that subjects could give when being introspective (for instance, in an interview or an attitude scale marking). But there does exist a problem which is described by Wilson (1977) that the data will be polluted with the observer's subjective bias (p.258). The naturalists are especially aware of this problem. Nevertheless, the naturalists (Guba, 1981) shift the burden of neutrality from the investigator to the data, requiring evidence, not of the certifiability of the investigator or his method, but of the confirmability of the data produced.

Robert Yin (1984) wrote a book called "Case Study Research".

In his book, he made a definition of "Case Study". It states:

> A case study is an empirical inquiry that:
> -investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when
> -the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which
> -multiple sources of evidence are used.(p.23)

This definition helps us to understand what a case study is and also helps to distinguish case study from other research strategies.

In order to judge the quality of a case study, Yin developed four criteria: construct validity, internal validity, external validity and reliability.

Construct Validity - establishing correct operational measures for the concepts being studied by using multiple sources of evidence; establishing a chain of evidence and having key informants review draft case report;

Internal Validity - establishing a causal relationship, whereby certain conditions are shown to lead to other conditions, as distinguished from spurious relationships by doing pattern matching, explanation-building and time-series analysis;

External Validity - establishing the domain to which a study's findings can be generalized by using replication and logic in multiple-case studies;

Reliability -------- demonstrating that the operations of a study - such as the data collection procedures - can be repeated, with the same results by using case study protocol and developing a case study data base. (p. 36)

It should be noted that the above tactics are only a part of what can be used to deal with these tests; there are various other tactics available (Yin, 1984). However, these criteria give some guidelines with which to conduct a good case study.

3.3 The Role of the Researcher

Someone would probably ask why I chose the Chinese families in this study rather than families from other countries. The answer is simply because I am Chinese and an ESL student myself, and I had similar experiences to the chosen families. In 1986, I came to Canada to pursue my education. After about one year and a half, my wife and my daughter came to Canada to join me. During the long period of being in Canada, we had many similar experiences as these two Chinese families had. Since I shared the same cultural background and also had the same experiences to be a foreigner, I might be the best person to understand their lives and it is much easier for me to gain insight into their thoughts. Janesick (1981) pointed out that any scientific understanding of human action, at whatever level of ordering or generality, must begin with, and be built upon an understanding of the everyday life of the members performing those actions. I felt that the knowledge I have about the Chinese culture and the experiences I had in Canada would help me a lot in this study to understand how these two family members acquire their second language.

It is just like the experience I had when I was learning a second language. If I was familiar with the topic in the listening materials or in the reading materials, it became a lot easier for me to understand and to interpret the meaning of the materials. It might be the same when analyzing data for a study.

Eisner (1977) also noted the importance of connoisseurship in the evaluation of education and argued that the evaluation of education was similar to the evaluation of a fine art work. He stated that,

> To appreciate the work of such men requires, therefore, not only attention to the work's qualities, but also an understanding of the ideas that gave rise to the work in the first place. This in turn requires some understanding of the socio-cultural context in which these artists worked, the sources from which they drew, and the influence their work had upon the work of others (p. 347).

If the person shares similar experiences as these artists, it is no doubt that this person will have the best understanding of these artists' works.

Then someone would also ask how readers could be sure that the judgments made by me as a researcher were reliable or without bias? I admit that some personal biases might be involved in the data analysis because I know these two families well and shared many similar experiences. However, if the researcher changed into another person who did not know anything about the culture and knowledge of these two families, and who did not share similar experiences, this researcher might have other biases. Tardif (1984, p.29) noted that it was a false assumption to believe that no biases exist in positivistic research or in other types of research.

I realize the advantages I have for this study, but on the other hand, I also realize that, I as a researcher, should try not to overuse my privileges so that my biases to the study would be minimized as much as possible. This can be done by double checking the interpretation with these two families.

3.4 Research Questions

Since this study adopted the case study as a research methodology, many different kinds of instruments, such as questionnaire, interview, and observation, were used to collect rich data. The purpose of using these research instruments focused on the following questions which were seen as guide-lines.

1. What are the differences between these two Chinese student families regarding their progress in English since they came to Canada?

a. How many years did the respondents spend learning English in China?

b. What was the respondents' English ability before coming to Canada in terms of listening, speaking, reading and writing?

c. How much time have the respondents spent learning English in Canada?

d. What was the respondents' English ability, i.e., listening, speaking, reading and writing, at the time when the data was collected ?

2. What are the respondents' attitudes toward Canadian people and why?

a. What were the respondents' initial thoughts about coming to canada?

b. How have the respondents' thoughts changed during the time they have stayed in Canada?

c. Why did such changes happen?

3. What are the respondents' experiences to be a foreigner and how do these experiences affect their second language acquisition?

a. What were the occasions when the respondents strongly felt that they should go to school to learn English and why?

b. What were the occasions when the respondents felt that English was useless for them and why?

c. How have changes in the respondents' attitudes toward Canadian people, i.e., social status and economic position, affected their second language acquisition?

d. What are the respondents' greatest concern since they came to Canada and why?

e. What are the most beneficial things that the respondents felt they would obtain upon learning a second language?

f. What is the language environment like in the respondents' working place and social life situation, and how did their working and social experience motivate their second language learning?

4. What is the relationship between motivation and second language acquisition?

a. How do the variable aspects of motivation relate to second language learning and to what extent?

b. How do these two families' second language learning experiences relate to second language theories?

b. What are the other potential relationships between motivation and second language acquisition which can be proposed from the present study?

5. What are the differences between adults and children of these two families regarding their English acquisition?

3.5 Research Respondents

The subjects of this study are called respondents because they are not only to be studied but also to participate in the data interpretation to some extent. All the respondents are Chinese.

This case study includes two family units. Both families have three family members; mother, father and child. The only difference is that one family has a daughter and the other has a son. The daughter in the first family was 9 years old when she came to Canada and the son in the second family was 15. Both families came from the People's Republic of China. However, one is from southern China and the other is from northern China. In both families, the fathers were students at the time that they came to Canada and only later did mothers and children join them. But the mothers and children in these two families came to Canada at different times. The mother and the daughter (whose family would be called "Family B" in the data presentation) arrived in Canada about one year earlier than the mother and the son (whose family would be called "Family A"). Before coming to Canada, these two family members had different occupations in China. Mr. A (senior) was a professor at a science and technology university and Mrs. A worked as a technician in an electric factory. Mr. B was a professor and a researcher at a medical university and Mrs. B practised as a doctor at a hospital. Both children were students.

The selection of respondents is based on their willingness to participate in this study. It should be noted that there were some differences in these two families. Based on the researcher's observation through informal contact with these two families, one family (Family B) seemed to enjoy their life in Canada; they were very active in learning English and had many friends; the father and mother in this family had good jobs which related their professional training and provided good working environment and good pay. The other family (Family A) seemed to have some problems. For example, the father could not find a job relating to his profession and so was the mother; they worked with a low pay and poor working conditions; and they did not have a lot of social life with their friends. These two families were chosen with the intent that it could provide a variety in the information of second language acquisition.

3.6 Second Language Proficiency Measurement

Second language proficiency measurement is an important factor in assessing the improvement of second language acquisition. Yet how to define second language proficiency is still controversial. There are several interpretations. In a traditional way, second language proficiency is viewed as mastering language knowledge including vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation. Some people see proficiency as the ability in the four basic skills, i.e. speaking, listening, reading and writing. More recently, attention has focused on communicative competence (Gardner, 1985) which emphasizes the ability to use the language to communicate effectively. Presently, the ability to use the language to communicate in a real-life situation has become the most important measure of proficiency in second language (Gardner, 1985). In this study, the researcher views second language proficiency as ability in the four basic language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) integrated with the ability of using these four skills to communicate in the real-life world.

There are many ways to assess second language proficiency according to the different assumptions. Most of the researchers used highly standardized second language proficiency tests. It can be argued that these tests are not appropriate because they are not considered to have an especially high level of face or content validity as representative of the kinds of language-use tasks that learners would be expected to encounter in real-life situations. (Clark, 1981). For example, listening comprehension in these tests is based on listening to brief tape-recorded utterances, short dialogues and a few longer utterances in artificial language rather than authentic materials such as TV or radio broadcasts or telephone communication or natural conversations.

This study used a relatively new second language assessment technique called "Self-Appraisal Technique" developed by Clark (1981). This assessment is highly praised by Gardner (1985) because it links the skill component with the performance aspect and the individual's perception of competence. It is a self-rating procedure, but unlike other self-rating methods that ask individuals to judge how well they speak or understand or read the language, it focuses on specific linguistic and socially relevant skills. This assessment contains 33 items with 14 items dealing with speaking skills, 11 with listening skills and 8 with reading proficiency (see Appendix 1).

The use of this assessment has two primary advantages. The first is that the self-appraisal scales could be developed in such a way as to be uniformly applicable to any language. The second is that these instruments could be prepared by designing certain questionnaires so as to directly reflect the real-life language-use situations of primary interest in the study (Clark, 1981). Nevertheless, we should be aware that some shortcomings will result with this assessment, e.g. overestimation or underestimation of competence by respondents.

However, Clark (1981) argued the advantages of this self-rating method. He indicated that in addition to providing a relatively detailed assessment of an individuals' self-perception of competence, the total scores on these scales correlated well with objective assessments of the same skills. Considering this new second language assessment, Gardner (1985) stated:

> It seems highly likely that this procedure will play an important role in future studies in this area. (p.14)

In this study, the researcher made some adjustments to the instruments for this assessment. Because the original version of the assessment is in English, which is too difficult for some respondents to understand, the researcher translated it into the Chinese language to increase the accuracy of the measurement. In order to increase validity, a double check by other people and a pilot test was conducted to make sure that the translation was as accurate as possible.

In order to increase validity and reliability of the assessment of respondents' second language proficiency, the researcher used additional measures which were considered together with the self-appraisal measurement. The researcher determined the level of respondents' second language proficiency not only based on the self-appraisal information, but also in a global way, such as considering information from other sources like personal language background and the real ability to use the language.

The assessment of the respondents' English proficiency is divided into two steps. The first is their English proficiency before coming to Canada. All respondents interviewed were asked to tell the amount of time spent learning English in China and their English ability level based on their stories and experiences which were involved in English learning. The second step involved obtaining information through "self-appraisal" questionnaires developed by Clark (1981). At the time of data collection, respondents had been in Canada for about three to four years.

Two other measurements were used to obtain information about writing and listening proficiency. In writing, each respondent was asked to write a short story on the topic of "how they came to Canada". For listening, the respondents were asked to watch a few short pieces of news from the TV, then tell what they heard.

With all the measurements, the respondents had the right to choose whatever languages, English or Chinese, with which they were most comfortable.

The data from the writing and listening were analyzed by two English native speakers who were experts in second language teaching.

3.7 Data Collection and Data Analysis

Guba (1981) proposed four conceptions of trustworthiness for naturalistic research - credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. These four conceptions might be affected by factor patternings, situational uniqueness, instrumental changes and investigator predilections. Guba argued (1981) that researchers could do something to reduce these effects. For example, prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation and member check could minimize the non-interpretability effects caused by factor patternings; thick data collection and thick descriptions could reduce the non-comparability effects caused by situational uniqueness; overlap methods could reduce non-comparability effect caused by instrumental changes, and triangulation, practice reflexivity and doing a confirmability check would minimize the bias effects caused by investigator predilections.

In order to build the four trustworthiness factors into the present study, these suggestions were considered as guidelines during the data collection and data analysis.

3.7.1 Data Collection

Time

Data collection continued for about one year and a half beginning in October, 1990. This period of time was very critical as it was when Chinese students were given permission to apply for permanent residence due to a political crisis in China[1]. The crisis had passed when data collection begun but this was a turning point for the Chinese students as they began to apply for permanent resident status in June, July and August of 1989. It would have been significant if the researcher could have observed the situation both before and after this important event to see what effect it had on learning English.

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[1] After the June 4th Tiananmen Square crisis, the Canadian government allowed the Chinese students to apply for landed-immigrant status inside Canada.

The data collection lasted for approximately one year and a half so that it could enable the researcher to have a prolonged "engagement" to the investigation and observation to increase the credibility of the study.

Setting

The settings for collecting the data varied in length depending upon the respondents comfort. Interviews were conducted mostly in the respondents' homes though at times information was recorded after informal telephone conversations. Other informal settings were useful, such as informal social visits, parties, outdoor activities, etc. In order to make the subjects' more comfortable, they were invited to the researchers' home which was also used as a data collecting place.

It was hoped that the data collected from the different settings would enable the researcher to obtain thick data and then provide thick descriptions in order to raise the generalizability of the study although the researcher did not intend to reach any generalizations.

In order to obtain thick descriptive data, many different kinds of research instruments were used to collect *information*. Some methods were repeated in order to strengthen the dependability and transferability of the results (Guba, 1981).

Data Collection Strategies

Yin (1984) pointed out that evidence for a case study may come from six sources: documents, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant-observation, and physical artifacts. In order to increase the construct validity, multiple sources of evidence were used. Therefore, in the present study, several strategies to gather evidence were established, such as questionnaire, interviews, close and participant observations.

Questionnaire

A questionnaire (see appendix 1) called "self-appraisal of second language proficiency" was used to obtain the respondents' personal information. This included questions about academic and language background, and personal experiences of learning English as a second language in the Canadian context. A Chinese version was developed to meet the requirement of some respondents who could not read English well. The translation was done by the researcher and a double check was done by another Chinese scholar who was efficient in both English and Chinese.

A pilot study was carried out by using this questionnaire to make sure that the translation was understandable and accurate.

The respondents were allowed to use any language format as long as they felt comfortable to read.

Interview

Another data collection technique was the interview which is considered as a major resource for case studies and is a very valuable technique in naturalistic studies. The questions of the interview were designed on the basis of research questions. Through the interviews, the respondents had the opportunities to share their lived experiences with the researcher about how they felt and thought about the importance of learning a second language. The researcher tried to use open-ended questions as much as possible. Most of the time, the interview was carried with the attendance of all family members. However, occasional individual interviews were also used. During the interview, an audio-tape recorder was used to record all the data and then transcriptions were made later based on the purpose of analysis.

The interviews were carried out in two forms; formal and informal. The formal interview was carefully prepared based on once each month but sometimes there were two interviews in one month. Before the interview, an appointment was made and usually the interview was done at the respondents' home. Both Chinese and English were used during the interview, depending on the choice of the respondents. However, Chinese was used most of the time. Informal interview happened when making telephone calls, and visits and social activities during the special events like having parties for the holidays and going out on the trips.

Observation

There are different kinds of observation which researchers can use for collecting information. In this study, direct observation was used. It was carried out when an interview was being conducted. It was also done during casual visits and social activities. Yin (1984) pointed out that by making a field visit to the case study "Site", an investigator was creating the opportunity for direct observation. This serves as one source of evidence in the study. Notes were written down afterwards by the researcher.

Observation offered the researcher some first-hand information about the respondents' real behaviour in the natural environment. The data from the observation helped the researcher have a better and real picture of how the respondents were doing regarding their second language learning. Observation focused on: a) What language did the respondents use most of the time? b) What kind of language learning environment was in their home? c) How did the respondents spend a day, a week or a month? d) What activities did they do during the holidays? e) What kind of people did they deal with mostly? f) What were the most important things in their daily life? h) What were the topics that the respondents talked about most? etc.

3.7.2 Data Analysis

The analysis of the data in this study was based on information from the questionnaires, interviews, and observations. This is the most difficult stage for case studies because the strategies and techniques have not been well defined in the past (Yin, 1984).

Several analysis techniques were used, such as pattern matching, which is one of the most desirable strategies in case studies, and categorizing which is to analyze the data based on the propositions of the research questions. Some tabulating techniques were also used. The presentation of the findings uses a descriptive technique based upon the categories of the research questions. A discussion then follows.

Since language learning is based on very complicated social and cognitive phenomena and because there are many factors and variables which influence the language learning of the individual, it is difficult for researchers to make generalizations, no matter what research methodologies are used. Therefore, little attempt to draw generalizations is made in this study. Some working hypotheses may be generated from the analysis of these data (Guba, 1981).

The researcher attempted to find similarities and differences between the two families as well as between individuals to see whether there were any patterns emerging which would help to understand the relationship between motivation and second language acquisition. During data analysis, the researcher checked the interpretation with the respondents to make sure that researcher's interpretations were consistent with what the respondents' meant. The researcher also shared the interpretation with the professors, with whom the researcher worked, and with the participants of these two Chinese families to avoid some of the researcher's bias and gain further insights and understanding of the second language learning process. It was hoped that the many data collecting activities used in this study would increase the credibility and confirmability of the study (Guba, 1981).

The analysis of the data began during the time when data was being collected. This enabled the researcher to consider some emerging meaning as the data was coming in and modified the study if needed.

3.8 Summary

In summary, this chapter provides some reasons why a case study approach is adopted in the present study. A theoretical framework for the study is presented. Based on the guidelines from the research theory, a case study design is presented. One thing should be noted, this study is in the specific context and for a certain group of people with their particular background. Therefore, no attempt is made to give a generalization. The results from this study are only to provide a better understanding of the complicated process of learning a second language.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

The main research concern of this study, as mentioned in Chapter One, is to investigate the second language learning experiences of two Chinese families in Canada to see what are the most important variables which motivated them to learn English as a second language. Hopefully, their personal experiences would provide some insight into the complicated phenomenon of learning a second language.

This chapter mainly presents the findings. The findings are derived from the interviews, observations, questionnaires and other measurements of English proficiency. The presentation is divided into two parts. The first part involves the English proficiency of the respondents when they first came to Canada and the English proficiency of the respondents when the data was collected. The second part presents the two families' experiences in Canada and the main variables or factors which have the most effect on learning English as a second language.

Some questions might be raised during the presentation of findings, but they will be discussed in Chapter Five.

4.1 The Assessment of English Proficiency

The Assessment of English proficiency is a very important part of this study. In order to understand the influence of motivation on language learning, we have to know how much of the language each respondent obtained.

English proficiency of the respondents was measured in several ways. Assessment of the respondents' English proficiency when they first came to Canada was basically dependent upon their reflections during the interviews. Respondents' English proficiency at the time data was collected was completed in several ways. The first was the self-appraisal measurement which is in the form of questionnaires looking at the four competences of listening, speaking, reading and writing. The second was an informal listening comprehension test in which the respondents were watching several short pieces of news from TV and were then asked to talk about what they heard and understood. The last method was a sample of written composition. The respondents were asked to write about how they came to Canada. Both tests were analyzed by two native English speaker.

4.1.1 The Respondents' English Proficiency When They Came to Canada

4.1.1.1 Family A

Family A came from Southern China. There are three members in the family - father, mother and son (who will be named Mr. A Senior, Mrs. A and Mr. A Junior respectively). Mr. A (senior) has been in Canada for about five and a half years. Mr. A (junior) and Mrs. A joined with Mr. A Senior about three years ago. All the family members can speak Mandarin and Shanghai dialect which is said to have adopted some sounds from English. Therefore, people used to believe that it is easier for those people to learn English.

Before coming to Canada, Mr. A Junior was a junior high school student (grade nine). He started to study English when he was in grade 5 in the elementary school. He continued to learn English in the junior high school. During those years, the main focus of learning English was pronunciation, vocabulary development and grammar, which were taught by the Chinese English teacher. In China, he did not have any chance to talk to native English speakers. Although in his late school years the English program introduced short and simple dialogues, he found that his speaking and listening ability were very weak. He could understand and speak the sentences in the textbook, but when he was asked to speak freely and listen to other people's talking he was not able to comprehend it. He said in the interview, "On coming to Canada, the most difficult thing for me was English because I found that I could not understand the teachers on every subject in the classrooms". Writing was even more difficult for him. After several years of learning English in China, what he learned was only some vocabulary which was still weak and he learned little about written communication.

Mrs. A did not know any English when she arrived in Canada. She could not even recognize the 26 English alphabet characters - A, B ... Y, Z. In her schooling in China, the second language she learned was Russian because at that time Russian was very popular. After graduating from college in 1965, she had been working in a factory. She did not have any chance to improve her education. It was impossible for her to learn a second language, especially during the Cultural Revolution when all foreign languages were banned.

In short, the English proficiency for Mrs. A was zero in the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing at the time she came to Canada.

Mr. A (senior) only had one year of English learning experience during his university study. It started from learning the English alphabet A,B,C, ---. After graduating from university in 1963, he went to work in a factory where he had no chance to improve his English. Just shortly after the Cultural Revolution, the universities in China began to admit graduate students. He decided to take the opportunity to go back to continue his graduate study. In order to get into that program, students had to pass several examinations, including a second language examination. He took the English exam which was very easy. Mr. A (senior) indicated, "At that time the English exam was very simple because that was the first time that universities took graduate students after the Cultural Revolution, but now the English exam is much more difficult". On the other hand, the language teaching in China was very traditional and the main focus was on grammar rather than on developing communicative ability. His listening, speaking and writing skills were very weak. Reading was a little better but because his vocabulary was limited, it was still a great problem for him. For example, when reading articles which were required in some courses at the University of Alberta, he had to look at the dictionary to find out the meaning of most of the words in the articles. Therefore it took him a long time to finish reading even a very short paper. He said, "The biggest problem I had was that my vocabulary was not enough and the second was that my response was too slow". Generally speaking, he had a very basic communicative ability in English when he came to Canada. Therefore, English was a great barrier to his study at the university.

4.1.1.2 Family B:

Family B is from the northern part of China. Their only spoken language was Mandarin, which is the official language in China. There are three members in this family, too. They are father, mother and daughter (who will be called Mr. B, Mrs. B and Miss B respectively). Mr. B came to Canada first. He had been in Canada for about 6 years. Mrs. B and Miss B joined Mr. B about four years ago.

Before coming to Canada, Miss B did not take any English classes at all. In China, most elementary schools do not offer English courses. In those few elementary schools which provide English programs, students have to wait until grade four or five before they get a chance to learn some English. When Miss B came to Canada, she was only in Grade Three, therefore she did not have the opportunity to learn English at all. She indicated in the interview that she did not know any English except for four words - Dad, Mom, Hello and Goodbye - which she learned from her father. Overall, her English proficiency was zero when she arrived in Canada.

"My English was almost none when I came to Canada", said Mrs. B. She had studied some English while at the university in China. Her subject at the university was medical science which required some English. Therefore, during her first year of university, there was an English course which was required. The time for English instruction was very limited. Every week, there was only one hour for English. During the second year of university, the English course became optional. She took it at the first part of the second year and then she quit. Before going to the university, she did not learn any English at high school because during the Cultural Revolution, any foreign language was banned. Mrs. B mentioned that the effect of learning English at the university was very limited. They did not have oral language training or writing training. The only thing she learned was some grammar and some vocabulary.

Her English teacher was a Chinese person whose specialty was Russian, not English. Because of meeting the political needs, he had to change his Russian to English. Therefore, the teacher's oral English language was not good except for the grammar.

Just before coming to Canada, Mrs. B took a three month English program just for the purpose of her promotion. After the Cultural Revolution, foreign languages had become more and more popular. In the late 1980s, people, who wanted to get their professional promotion, had to pass an English exam. This program focused on the vocabulary and grammar as well.

In China, there was no exposure to native English speakers for Mrs. B. The only time was just before coming to Canada when she went to Beijing to get her airplane tickets. All the people working in the ticket office were speaking English. One of them said "OK" to her when the procedures were finished. But she couldn't understand what he was talking about. Now when she recalls the story, she feels very sorry for herself.

Basically, Mrs. B had very little English when she came to Canada. Her English proficiency in speaking, listening and writing was practically zero. Reading, she admitted, was better than the other three skills. She said that she could read a little English, but mainly just word by word.

Mr. B seems to have the best education in English among the three of them. He started to learn English from the alphabet while at university in China. He took English courses during his first one year and a half. During that time, English was a required course so he had to take it. After one year and a half, English became an optional course. Though many of his classmates quit this program, only five, including Mr.B, continued to learn English. This was in the middle of the 1970's.

Fortunately when he studied English, he had a very good teacher. His teacher worked as an interpreter for a long time at

Beijing, China. During the Cultural Revolution, he was sent to Mr. B's university to have a re-education. Because the teacher used good teaching strategies, the effect of teaching English was high and the students were motivated as reported by Mr. B.

In 1978, the motivation for learning English for Mr. B was becoming greater. This was because it was the first year China opened its door to the western countries after ten years of being isolated from the outside world during the Cultural Revolution. English had become a very popular language in China and everyone tried to learn some English. Therefore, Mr. B was highly respected by his teachers and classmates because he knew some English. In 1983, Mr. B was admitted into an English training program. This program put emphasis on the four language skills, that is, listening, speaking, reading and writing. During that one year and a half, he had two very nice teachers and quite often there were some visiting scholars from English speaking countries who came to give seminars and speeches. This provided Mr.B a great opportunity to improve his English. Mr. B studied very hard because he wished that he could go abroad to study some day. Mr. B said, "In 1984, my English was not too bad. I could read the medical magazines in English. I could understand most of what the others said in English. Because I did some translation, I began to write something in English as well".

When Mr. B arrived in Canada, he did not have great problems with the English language. Basically, he had no problem understanding the common daily speech. He could express his ideas in English although sometimes he had to use different words to make one idea clear. Reading was highly developed for Mr. B. There wasn't any problem reading something related to his specialty area. His writing ability was low but he could write something anyway.

4.1.1.3 Summary

Considering the English proficiency when the respondents came to Canada, the situation for both families is quite similar. In Family A, the wife had no English at all. The husband and the son had learned some English in China, but what they had learned was mostly grammar and vocabulary and the husband had very little oral language ability. In Family B, the daughter had no exposure to English. The wife took some English courses in China, but her communicative ability was almost zero although she could understand some simple and familiar reading of words. The husband's language ability was a little better than all the others. He had no problems reading the magazines in his professional area and he also could write something simple. His oral language was not very good but he could understand some basic English and express some simple ideas.

4.1.2 The Assessment of the Respondents' Present English Proficiency

Assessment of the respondents' present English proficiency is based on the three measures. The first one is the self-evaluation which uses a list of questions (See Appendix 1), designed to ascertain the proficiency level of the four language skills - listening, speaking, reading and writing. The second is the listening comprehension test. The respondents were asked to watch two or three short pieces of news and then to talk about what they heard. They had the choice to speak English or Mandarin. The third one is the writing test. The respondents were given a topic and asked to write one or two paragraphs approximately one page in length. The topic assigned was "How I came to Canada". Miss B couldn't remember how she came to Canada in details because she was too young at that time. Therefore, she chose something else to write. Following are the results of the findings.

4.1.2.1 Self-Evaluation of English Proficiency

The self-evaluation questionnaire was translated into two languages, Mandarin and English. Each respondent was distributed a copy based on their choice whether to use Mandarin or English. They were asked to finish it independently without talking to each other.

Question #1:

The first question asked the respondents to judge their present level of speaking ability in the language of English. Six different levels were designed from one as the beginning to six as the highest (see Appendix 1).

TABLE THREE

Self-Evaluation of Speaking Ability

Respondents	E.L.[1]	1	2	3	4	5	6
Family A	Mr. A		x				
	Mrs. A	x					
	Mr. A(J)			x			
Family B	Mr. B				x		
	Mrs. B					x	
	Miss B				x		

Note: The numbers in the table indicates the different levels of English proficiency. The number 6 is the highest and the number 1 is the lowest. For details, see Appendix 1.

From the table, it is very obvious that the speaking ability of the respondents in both families is so different from Level One to Level Six. Several points might be drawn from this table.

a. All the members in Family B are rated higher than all the members in Family A indicated by self-assessment.

b. The wives in these families are in the opposite position. One (Family A) is in the first level which is the lowest among all the respondents but the other (Family B) is in the fifth level which is the highest among all the respondents.

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[1] E.L. English proficiency level

The first level indicates that speech is limited to a few words and the speaker has great difficulty even when it is spoken very slowly. At this level, the speaker cannot communicate any information in English.

The fifth level means that the speaker can understand native speakers even when they are speaking quickly and using sophisticated or colloquial expressions. The vocabulary of the speaker is very extensive even for technical matters and the speaker can talk fluently and accurately about almost any subject with which the speaker is familiar. At this level, the speaker makes only very few grammatical errors and the pronunciation is very good but not completely native.

From the above descriptions, it can be seen that the speaking ability at these two levels is now quite different. The speaking ability of the two wives at the time they came to Canada, was very similar. Both of them claimed that their speaking ability was zero. The difference is that Mrs. B came to Canada a year earlier than Mrs. A. and had studied English for about a year and a half in China so that she had some vocabulary and reading ability before coming to Canada. After a few years in Canada, their English speaking ability became so different. One wonders what caused such differences.

c. Another interesting point can be drawn from the table. When Mr. A, Junior came to Canada, he mentioned that he spent about five years learning English in China. However, when Miss B came to Canada, she did not have any English at all. Now after a few years in Canada, Miss rated herself higher than Mr. A, Junior.

d. When Mr. A (junior) and Mr. A (senior) came to Canada, Mr. A (senior) had a better speaking ability than Mr. A (junior), but from this self-assessment, Mr. A (junior) is higher than Mr. A (senior).

Question #2:

Question #2 required the respondents to judge their own level of reading ability. Once again there are six different levels. The following are the results from the respondents in both families.

TABLE FOUR

Self-Evaluation of Reading Ability

E.L.[2] Respondents		1	2	3	4	5	6
Family A	Mr. A				x		
	Mrs. A	x					
	Mr. A(J)					x	
Family B	Mr. B					x	
	Mrs. B					x	
	Miss B				x		

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[2] E.L. English proficiency level

Note: The numbers in the table indicates the different levels of English proficiency. The number 6 is the highest and the number 1 is the lowest. For details, see Appendix 1.

From the table, it can be seen that the reading ability of both family members is very close except for Mrs. A who still stayed at the beginning level.

Mr. A, Junior, Mr. B and Mrs. B all have reached the same level which means that with occasional use of a dictionary, they can read without difficulty any prose directed at the general reader and all materials in the fields with which they are familiar. Why have Mr. A, Junior, Mr. B and Mrs. B reached such a high level? This question needs further exploration which will be discussed later on. Miss B's reading ability was self-assessed to be the same as Mr. A Senior which means that they can grasp the essential meaning of newspaper items addressed to the general reader and routine correspondence reports, and technical material in fields with which they are familiar without using a dictionary, but they need to refer to the dictionary fairly often in order to work out the precise meaning of the entire text. However, the reading ability for Mr. A Senior and Miss B is only one level below that for Mr. B Junior, Mr. B and Mrs. B.

The most interesting thing is that Mrs. A has not improved in reading English though she has been in Canada for a few years.

QUESTION #3:

The third self-evaluation question dealt with writing ability. Writing ability is also rated on six levels (see Appendix 1 for details). The following presents the results from the respondents' self-evaluation.

TABLE FIVE

Self-Evaluation of Writing Ability

Respondents	E.L.[3]	1	2	3	4	5	6
Family A	Mr. A,			x			
	Mrs. A	x					
	Mr. A(J)				x		
Family B	Mr. B					x	
	Mrs. B				x		
	Miss B				x		

Note: The numbers in the table indicates the different levels of English proficiency. The number 6 is the highest and the number 1 is the lowest. For details, see Appendix 1.

Generally speaking, the level of writing ability from self-evaluation for Family B members is higher than Family A but close except for Mrs. A. Mr. B is in the highest level (level 5) which indicates that he can write complex personal and business letters, as well as many other kinds of documents, but there is only an occasional hint that he is not a native writer of English.

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[3] E.L. English proficiency level

Mr. A Senior has been in canada for almost the same number of years as Mr. B, but Mr. A Senior's writing ability is much lower than Mr. B. Mr. A Senior can only write relatively simple items, (such as a short note to a friend) that communicates basic messages but usually contains a considerable number of misspellings and/or grammatical errors.

Another point from this table is that Mrs. A is still rated to be at the first level of writing ability, the same as with reading ability. She reports that she cannot write any English although she has been in Canada for a few years.

Questions about What the Respondents Can Do in English

The following groups of questions are concerned about what the respondents can do regarding their listening ability, speaking ability and their reading ability in the real life situation. Each group of questions has a list of statements which measure the respondents' ability to undertake a language task in a particular function. There are three choices they can choose from. They are "Quite Easily" (1), "With Some Difficulty" (2), and "With Great Difficulty or Not At All" (3)(see Appendix 1 for details).

What the Respondents Can Do in Speaking:

Table Six shows the results of the first group of questions concerning speaking ability .

TABLE SIX

WHAT THE RESPONDENTS CAN DO REGARDING SPEAKING ABILITY

CONTENT	Mr.A	Mrs. A	MrA,J	Mr.B	Mrs.B	Mis.B
Say the days of the week.	2	2	1	1	1	1
Count to 10 in English.	1	2	1	1	1	1
Give the current date Month Year, date).	1	3	1	1	1	1
Order a simple meal in a restaurant.	2	3	1	1	1	1
Ask directions on the street.	2	2	1	1	1	1
Buy clothes in a departmentstore.	2	3	1	1	1	1
Introduce myself in social situations, and use appropriate greetings and leave-taking expressions.	2	3	2	1	1	1
Give simple biographical information about myself (place of birth, composition of family, early schooling, etc.).	2	3	1	1	1	1
Talk about my favourite hobby at some length, using appropriate vocabulary.	2	3	2	1	1	1
Describe my present job, studies, or other major life activities accurately and in detail.	2	3	1	1	1	1
Describe the Canadian educational system in some detail.	2	3	2	2	2	2

CONTENT	Mr. A	Mrs. A	MrA,J	Mr.B	Mrs.B	Mis.B
Tell what I plan to be doing 5 years from now, using appropriate future tenses.	2	3	1	1	2	2
Describe the role played by the Canadian government.	2	3	2	2	2	2
State and support with examples and reasons a position on a controversial topics (for example; birth control, nuclear safety, environment pollution).	2	3	2	1	2	2

Table Six clearly shows that Family B members have much higher speaking ability than Family A members do. Based on their self-evaluation, Mr. B's speaking ability is a little higher than Mrs. B and Miss B. However, they are very close to each other.

In Family A, the situation is quite different. Mrs. A seems to be having great difficulty in speaking English. Actually in her questionnaires, she indicated that she could not speak English at all. Mr. A (senior) also has a lot of problems speaking English. Mr. A (junior) has the highest speaking ability among his family members, but compared to Family B members, he is still lower.

What the Respondents Can Do in Listening:

The second group of questions focused on what the respondents can do in terms of listening ability. The method of rating is the same as that in the first group of questions.

TABLE SEVEN

WHAT THE RESPONDENTS CAN DO REGARDING LISTENING

CONTENT	Mr.A	Mrs. A	MrA,J	Mr.B	Mrs.B	Mis.B
Understand very simple statements or questions in English ("Hello", "How are you?" What is your name? "Where do you live?" etc.)	1	2	1	1	1	1
In face-to-face conversation, understand a native speaker who is speaking slowly and carefully (i.e. deliberately adapting his or her speech to suit me).	1	3	1	1	1	1
In face-to-face conversation with a native speaker who is speaking slowly and carefully to me, tell whether the speaker is referring to past, present, or future events.	2	3	1	1	1	1
In face-to-face conversation, understand native speakers who are speaking to me as quickly and as colloquially as they would to another native speaker.	2	3	2	1	1	1
On the telephone, understand a native speaker who is speaking to me slowly and carefully (i.e. deliberately adapting his or her speech to suit me).	2	3	1	1	1	1

CONTENT	Mr.A	Mrs. A	MrA,J	Mr.B	Mrs.B	Mis.B
On the telephone, understand a native speaker who is talking as quickly and as colloquially as he or she would to a native speaker of English.	3	3	2	1	1	1
Understand two native speakers when they are talking rapidly with one another.	3	3	2	1	1	1
Understand movies without subtitles.	3	3	1	1	1	1
Understand news broadcasts on the radio.	2	3	1	1	1	1
Understand train departure announcements and similar kinds of "public address system" announcements.	2	3	1	1	1	1
Understand the words of popular songs on the radio.	3	3	2	1	2	1
Understand play-by-play descriptions of sports events (for example: a soccer match) on the radio.	2	3	1	1	2	2

From Table Seven, it is clear that Family B members still have higher listening skills than Family A members. The Family B members are very close to each other with only one or two items which they found difficult to understand, but Mr. B is a little higher than the rest in his family with all the items at "Quite Easily" level.

The situation in Family A is quite different. Mrs. A's listening ability for English is almost zero. The listening ability for Mr. A (senior) is also quite low. He responded that most items were difficult or had great difficulty. Mr. A (junior) who seems to be better, found most of the items in the easy category and a few items in the difficult level.

What the Respondents Can Do in Reading English:

The last group of questions is regarding the respondents' reading ability. They were asked to rate themselves based on the list of statements concerning reading ability. There are eight statements in this group. The following are the results from the responses.

TABLE EIGHT

WHAT THE RESPONDENTS CAN DO IN READING

CONTENT	Mr. A	Mrs. A	MrA,J	Mr.B	Mrs.B	Mis.B
Read, on store fronts, the type of store or the services provided (for example, :dry cleaning," "bookstore," "butcher", etc.).	1	3	1	1	1	1
Read personal letters or notes written to me in which the writer has deliberately used simple words and constructions.	1	3	1	1	1	1
Read personal letters and notes written as they would be to a native user of English.	2	3	2	1	1	1

CONTENT	Mr. A	Mrs. A	MrA,J	Mr.B	Mrs.B	Mis.B
Understand newspaper headlines.	2	3	1	1	1	1
Read and understand magazine articles at a level similar to those found in Time or Newsweek, without using a dictionary.	2	3	2	1	1	1
Read popular novels without using a dictionary.	3	3	3	1	1	1
Read a highly technical material in a particular academic or professional field with no use or only very infrequent use of a dictionary.	2	3	3	1	2	2
Read newspaper "Wanted Ads" with comprehension, even when many abbreviations are used.	2	3	1	1	1	1

Table Eight indicates that Family B is much higher than Family A regarding reading ability. In Family A, Mrs. A had all eight items in the category of great difficulty or not at all, which means that she had very limited reading skill. Mr. A's (senior) reading ability is still quite weak. Most of the items he rated were in the category of "with some difficulties" and only two statements were in the easy category. Mr. A (junior) seems to be the best reader in Family A. The level of difficulty for these eight items are evenly distributed.

In Family B, the ratings are very close. Mr. B had all the items in the first category marked "Quite easy". Mrs. B and Miss B had exactly the same rating with 2 items in category 2 showing "some difficulty" and the others in 1 were marked quite easy.

Summary

Several conclusions may be drawn from the presentation of the data on the self-evaluation of English proficiency.

1. After a few years in Canada, Mrs. A showed little improvement in the four English language skills.

2. Both Miss B and Mr. A Junior have made great progress in both oral and written English. Miss B had shown tremendous improvement.

3. Mrs. B, although she is an adult, also had great acquisition of English both in the oral and the written modes. She felt very confident and comfortable communicating with native English speakers.

4. Mr. B was rated quite high with his English proficiency both in his oral and written English. However, Mr. A Senior seemed to be having difficulties. From the interview, he mentioned that he felt his English was declining rather than improving.

4.1.2.2 Respondents' Writing Assessments

The above demonstrated the respondents' English abilities based on the reflections from the respondents and their self-evaluations.

In addition to the self-assessment, a writing measurement was also delivered. All the respondents were asked to write a short article of about 150 words. This enabled the researcher to view their language from another aspect.

The following will present the results of their writing samples (see Appendix 2).

Among six respondents, five wrote a short article except Mrs. A, who said that she did not have the ability to write anything.

All the writings were assessed by two native speakers who were ESL teachers at Alberta Vocational College (AVC). What they were asked to do was to read the articles one by one, and to make a note at the place they thought was wrong. At the end of each paper, they were also required to make a short comment.

The following table shows the results of the five writing samples by the category of mistakes in the writing.

TABLE NINE

Respondents' Writing Assessment*

Descriptions	Mr.A,S	Mr.A,J	Mr.B	Mrs.B	Miss B
Misuse of words	0/1	8/5	3/3	3/2	1/2
Misuse of articles	6/4	3/2	1/3	3/1	1/0
Misuse of prepositions	4/5	4/4	0/1	5/1	6/5
Overuse of words	0/1	3/1	1/0	1/1	4/1
Mis-spelling	4/1	4/4	2/2	2/0	4/6
Misuse of phrases	1/2	2/2	3/1	1/3	2/3
Misuse of punctuation	3/2	8/0	1/0	5/7	11/2
Misuse of capital and low-case letter	2/2	1/0	3/2	0/0	13/4
Misuse of single and plural formations	2/4	2/2	0/0	3/1	1/2
Total[4]	44	55	25	38	68

* The above table shows the numbers of the mistakes mae by the five respondents from these two families. There are two numbers in each box and each number represents the mistake judged by one native speaker. For example, if the number in one box under the category of Mis-spelling is "4/1", this means that one native speaker judged 4 mistakes in mis-spelling and the other native speaker judged only one.

From the table, it is easy to see that the total number of mistakes is least for Mr. B, while Mr. A (junior) and Miss B seem to have the most mistakes. However, because of the different length of the writings, these numbers actually did not tell the real situation. The following table presents the percentage of the mistakes in each category. In this way, a better picture of their writings might be understood.

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[4] The total number is the sum of mistakes in all categories, but it should be noticed that the real mistakes may be half of that total number which includes all the mistakes judged by two native speakers.

TABLE TEN

Respondents' Writing Assessment by Percentage[5]

Descriptions	Mr.A,S	Mr.A,J	Mr.B	Mrs.B	Mis.B
Misuse of words	0.4%	4.5%	4.8%	4.6%	2%
Misuse of articles	4.5%	1.7%	3.2%	3.7%	0.1%
Misuse of prepositions	4%	2.7%	0.8%	5.5%	1.9%
Overuse of words	0.4%	1.3%	0.8%	1.8%	0.9%
Mis-spelling	2.2%	2.7%	3.2%	1.8%	1.8%
Misuse of phrases	1.3%	1.3%	3.2%	3.7%	0.9%
Misuse of punctuation	2.2%	2.7%	0.8%	11%	2.3%
Misuse of capital and low-case letter	1.8%	0.3%	4%	0%	3%
Misuse of single and plural formations	2.7%	1.3%	0%	3.7%	0.5%
Total	19.5%	18.5%	20.8%	35.8%	13.4%

Here, a clearer picture can be seen concerning the total percentage of the mistakes made by the five respondents. The order from the least to the most is Miss B, Mr. A (junior), Mr. A

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[5] This percentage number is obtained by dividing the total number in each box from Table 9 by the total number of words in writing samples.

(senior), Mr. B and Mrs. B. Of course, Mrs. A would be the last because she did not write anything.

It is very interesting that the order made by the two judges (the two native speakers) was very close to what was obtained from the above analysis of self-rating, which is in the order of Mr. A (junior), Miss B, Mr. A (senior), Mr. B and Mrs. B. The difference is only between Mr. A (senior) and Miss B.

On the comments made by these two native speakers, it was said that although there were fewer mistakes made by Miss B, her writing reflected lack of thoughts and the story was simpler. One of the native speakers said, " This piece of writing is very advanced as far as ESL writing, but ... immature, ... she writes like a kid". Actually, she is a kid and there is nothing unusual. On the other hand, Mr. A (junior) made more mistakes, but his writing expressed more thoughts and was poetic, which was commented on by another native speaker, "This person's style seems very poetic to me. ... a somewhat foreign style to be enjoyable and to think a slightly different way of using words can only enrich our language". That is why the two native speakers switched Mr. A (junior) and Miss B around.

It is very important to note that the two children in both families were rated at the top of the writing sample. Among the adults, Mr. A (senior) and Mr. B were close although Mr. A (senior) was slightly ahead of Mr. B. The comments from the two native speakers for both Mr. A (senior) and Mr. B were very similar, which was that the writing was very straightforward and easy to understand.

Mrs. B was rated last in her writing except for Mrs. A. A comment from one of the native speakers was that the writing was not confusing, but she did not understand how to use commas or other rules of language usage.

In summary, from the analysis of the respondents' writing, it might be concluded that the rating of these writings was that Mr. A (junior) had the highest writing ability, then Miss B, Mr. A (senior), Mr. B and Mrs. B. The last one should be Mrs. A because she did not write anything. This rating is slightly different from the results of self-assessment shown in Table 5 which indicates that Mr. B has the highest writing ability; Mr. A (junior), Mrs. B and Miss B have the same level and Mr. A (senior) is the lowest except for Mrs. A.

4.1.2.3 Listening Comprehension Assessed by Listening to the News on TV

One of the listening assessments was done by the respondents themselves, which is shown in Table Seven. The respondents were asked to watch three short news pieces from TV, and then they were also asked to tell what they had heard. Two native speakers were invited to do the assessment and make comments on it. The following information is from this assessment.

Family A:

Mrs. A did not participate in this because she thought her

English was not good enough to do this kind of test. Therefore she was just sitting there and did not say anything.

Mr. A (senior) and Mr. A (junior) were very close in their listening ability, but the two native speakers judged that both of them had their own strategies, even though Mr. A (senior) seemed to have higher and better listening skills. It was interesting to find out that the father and the son's listening processes were different. This might be due to the difference between adults and children learning a second language.

It was found that when Mr. A (junior) was listening, he was focusing on catching the general ideas. When he was asked to tell what he had heard, he reorganized what he had heard by adding his own words to make the story logical and reasonable although some thoughts were obviously his own. However, the story paraphrased by him made sense and the main ideas were there.

Mr. A (senior) was different from Mr. A (junior). When he was listening, he put his emphasis on the detail, for example, numbers, years, and places. But he lost the whole context. Some of the details he caught were more accurate but the story he told sometimes did not make sense.

The two native speakers made comments on both of them and said that the father and son could understand the basic ideas although they could not catch all of them. But listening comprehension was very good for ESL students.

Family B:

The comments for the two native speakers on Family B was that all three family members could understand the main ideas of the stories but Mr. B seemed to have higher listening skills and he understood most of stories. Miss B also had very good listening skills, but sometimes she was a little confused because of the content. Mrs. B had the lowest listening level in the family. Although she understood the basic idea, she was always confused by some of the details which she did not understand.

During the process of assessment in this family, it was found that the knowledge of the content about the listening materials was an important factor.

Why did Mr. B seem to have higher listening skills? He seemed to know what was happening around the world. One of the topics was about one important person in Quebec who quit the Liberal Party and then joined the Conservative Party. Because Mr. B read the newspaper everyday, it was not difficult for him to understand it. When he was asked to tell the story about what he had heard, it was easy for him.

But when Miss B was asked to tell the story, sometimes she found it difficult. She said that although she understands the language very well, she just could not get the ideas, which meant that she did not understand it. One of the big problems, she explained, was that she did not have the knowledge about the content in the story.

It was interesting to find out that the strategy she used to listen is someway similar to Mr. A (junior), which was that she tried to catch the general ideas and then retold the story by adding her own words and making the story more logical and reasonable.

Mrs. B seemed to have some problems. She said that she caught most of the words and understood what was going on in these stories, but she said that some of the details did not make sense for her.

When she was asked to tell what she had heard, she could only tell the general ideas. Meanwhile she kept asking questions about some details in the story. For examples, who was the PM ? What was the House of Commons? What was the difference between senator and PM? Because she lacked many of the concepts of Canadian cultural knowledge, it is understandable that she would find some difficulty in comprehension.

In summary, among the five respondents to the listening test, based on the judgement by the two native speakers, all of the five could understand the basic ideas of what they had heard. However, the different individuals had their own listening strategies. The rank order provided by the two native speakers was Mr. A (junior), Mr. B, Miss B, Mr. A (senior), and Mrs. B. It was also found that the knowledge about the listening materials had an important impact on their test.

4.2 Findings of Canadian Experiences for the Two Families

In this section, the findings from interviews and observations are presented regarding the respondents' experiences in Canada and the factors which were considered as the major influences on their second language acquisition. The presentation is organized based on the themes such as factors affecting choices to Canada, experiences of language shock and culture shock, change of beliefs, values and social life, motivation to learn a second language, language environment andattachment to the ethnic group.

4.2.1 Factors affecting choices to Canada

Mr. A (senior) and Mr. B came to Canada in the same year. Before coming to Canada, Mr. A (senior) taught in a science and technology university in Shanghai. His area was mechanical engineering in textile industry. Mr. B worked in a medical university in northern China. He taught some courses in that university and also did some research in the research centre. It seems that both of them had very good jobs in China, but they did not think that way. Mr. B said,"In China, professors and researchers were not respected although the situation is getting better now. Especially during the cultural revolution, they were considered as dangerous people." This situation was not only politically, but also economically. Mr. A (senior) gave an example. He explained that he had a high school classmate who did not go to the university and instead found a job as a worker right after the high school. After about 15 years, his classmate made almost the same money as he did although he spent many years studying at the university. Mr. A (senior) complained that that was not fair.

There are several factors which affect Mr. A (senior) and Mr. B to make decisions to pursue their education in North America. The first was the social climate. After the death of Mao Zhedong in 1976, China declared the end of the Cultural Revolution. Soon after, the Chinese government had a series of reforms. One of them was to open the door to the western countries, which had been closed for many, many years. Since then a variety of activities have been carried out between western countries and China, such as an exchange of scholars, trading, travelling, and much more.

Since then, English had become extremely popular in China because of the Chinese open-door policy. Everyone tried every opportunity to learn some English, whether for the young people or for the old people. If someone knew some English and spoke a few sentences, he would receive some respect and admiration from his colleagues and other people. However, different people had their own purpose for learning English. For example, young people hoped that if they learned English, they would be able to find good jobs. Such jobs might provide opportunities which could enable them to go to other countries and older people wished that they could pass the English examination to get promoted. In

China, the government set an examination called "Second Language Test". English and Japanese were the most popular languages for these tests. If people wanted to get promoted in their profession, such as, from lecturers to professors in universities or from engineers to chief engineers in industrial fields, etc., they had to pass the second language test. For most senior high school students, English was also important because it was a major second language on which they had to take examinations in order to get into universities.

During 1985 to 1989 in China, there was a big wave of going to study abroad, especially in some large cities, such as in Shanghai, Beijing, and Guangzhou. Thousands of young and middle age people tried every means to get out to the western countries or advanced countries to study, such as, Japan, Canada, United States and some countries in Europe.

There were several ways to get out of China. The first one was to get sponsorship from the Chinese government, and the second was to obtain financial support from their relatives abroad. There were some people who were able to receive some financial support from universities in North America. A few people even tried to borrow money from their relatives so that they were able to go out first and hoped to return the money later on. Whichever way they chose was very difficult to achieve. In China, people who wanted to go out were far too many and very few people succeeded.

It was in this social climate that Mr. A (senior) and Mr. B were seeking such opportunities to study abroad and they were the lucky ones.

The second factor was the personal professional development. When asked what were the advantages and benefits they could gain from studying abroad, Mr. A (senior) responded with a smile that one of the reasons which really encouraged him just like many other Chinese students was the personal academic growth. China had closed its door to western countries for many years so that there were hardly any people who got the opportunity to study in those countries. Since China had carried out the open-door policy, people were able to seek such opportunities. During the last decade, people in China, as well as the government, thought if someone got an education from those advanced countries, they would have a higher quality of education and therefore were promoted faster and treated better than the ones who only obtained their eduction in China. For example, there is a policy in China that the salary for those people who get their degree from other advanced countries will be higher than those who receive the same degree in China. The personal growth was also the important factor for Mr. B. He said in the interview:

> What really encouraged me to come to Canada was that I believed I would have a very bright future if I could get some experiences studying or working in Canada. That was because in my university nobody had such experiences before. I would be the first one in my university who had come to an advanced country to get an education.

Mr. B acknowledged that he learned from newspapers and magazines how advanced research technology and equipment were being used in universities and hospitals in western countries. The more he heard about it, the more eager he was to go and see it.

As well, both Mr. A (senior) and Mr. B had realized that their social status would be higher if they could obtain some education from advanced countries. People admired those people very much who got their degrees from the developed countries.

The third was the personal financial benefit. China is not a rich country and although it has improved a lot in comparison with the past, it is still a developing country. At that time, the average income per-month was around 150 Chinese dollars which is worth about 30 Canadian dollars. Therefore, Mr. A (senior) thought if he could come to North America to study, he could probably save more money than people could ever earn in China. Mr. B also mentioned that economics was another important factor which encouraged him to make such a move to seek opportunities to study in North America.

It seems that Mr. A (senior) and Mr. B had similar ideas why they would like to seek the opportunity to study in North America. However there were some differences between them. For Mr. A (senior), obtaining a degree and earning more money were the major intents. At that time he did not have any intention to stay in North America.

Mr. B was slightly different. He had the intent to live in

North America when he began to make the application. He mentioned in the interview:

> From the beginning of my seeking for the opportunity to go to North America, I hoped that I could stay and never had to return back to China.

Mr. A's (senior) wife and son joined him later on. When they applied to come to Canada, they were so excited, said Mrs. A, because they could visit Mr. A whom they had not seen for a long time and also they would have a great opportunity to see another world, which people had always been dreaming for. Mr. A (junior) thought that it was also a good opportunity for him to learn some English.

Mr. B's wife and daughter came to Canada a year and half later. Mrs. B worked in a hospital as a doctor before coming to Canada. Their daughter was in grade 3 at that time. They both came to Canada to see Mr. B, who they had not seen for a long time, and also to see another world. Another thought for them to come to Canada was that it was a good opportunity for their daughter to learn some English which was a very popular language in China. Mrs. B said she was very proud of herself that she had this opportunity. After they received the visa from the Canadian Embassy, Mrs. B suddenly became a hero because many other people approached her so differently and they admired her. All her friends and relatives came to see them off at the train station on the day they left for Canada. Mrs. B said that kind of feeling could not be described by words.

In summary, there are several factors which influenced both families to make the decision to come to Canada. The most important ones are the political and social climate, personal academic development and economic reasons. Although there are many things in common between these two families, their reasons for staying in North America are slightly different. This difference might have great impact on their attitudes towards the English group after they arrived in Canada.

4.2.2 Language Shock

Upon arriving in Canada, most Chinese students and their spouses were very excited because this was, at least for the majority of them, the first time in their life to see another part of the world. Everything was new to them. They were very eager to taste and experience the western country which is called "Heaven" on the earth by many Chinese people because they thought that western countries were very rich and people could get whatever they wanted. Many of them were also anxious to test the English they learned in China. However this kind of excitement would not last long. Soon after, they had to face the reality which was how to survive in this new world. This was a very hard task for them because everything was so different from what they were used to having. One of the most crucial things facing them immediately was the language. For most of the Chinese students' spouses, English was completely new. Even for those Chinese students who learned English in China, they still felt that what they had learned in China was far from satisfactory. They had to struggle for a while to get used to this new world. Therefore within a short time after arriving in Canada, they experienced different kinds of language shock which refers to the fear and lack of confidence in using English (Schumann, 1986).

In this section, the focus of data presentation is on the shock these two families experienced with respect to learning the English language during their early staying in Canada.

Family A:

Mr. A arrived in Canada at the end of 1986. He had been admitted as a master's student in the faculty of Home Economics with a focus on textiles. He was sponsored by CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency). Because of arriving late for the school year, he did not have much time before taking courses. At the beginning, it was extremely hard for him because of the language. Mr. A (senior)said,

> The language is obviously the barrier for my study and the content of the subject I study is also the problem for me because in China mechanical engineering in textile industry is my area but now I have to learn the textile preservation which is totally new for me.

Mr. A (senior) mentioned that sitting in the classroom for three hours, he did not get very much from it. He was feeling very frustrated in the classroom because he saw other students very active in the classroom. They raised their hands and spoke out their ideas freely and finished their homework very fast. But Mr. A (senior) could not do it. He said,

> Most of the time, I kept silent in the classroom. Sometimes I had some ideas and wished to present them in the class, but I was so scared that I did not have the courage to raise my hand and speak out because I felt that if I made mistakes I would lose my face. Therefore, I have always felt I was left out in the class. Quite often, I had to ask for a time extension to complete my homework. It was not the thing I liked to do, but I did not have choice because I had to spend much longer time to do it.

After classes, there were a lot of materials to read. But even a very short article took him hours and hours. To finish reading one article, he had to check many, many words from the dictionary. He showed some of the articles on which it could be seen that on the side of papers there were full of small Chinese characters. When was asked whether Mr. A (senior) asked for some help from his classmates and professor or had a discussion with them, Mr. A (senior) said he never tried because he was scared. He mentioned that he was much older than most of his classmates and he believed that older people should know more than younger people. Therefore, if he asked them for help, he would lose his face.

"Saving face" and "losing face" are two strong conceptions in the Chinese culture. The term "face" refers to the impression of the public on someone. Chinese people always try to show their "good things" and hide their "bad things". There is a saying in China that "the scandal in the family cannot be told to other people because it would lose their face".

This belief made the fear and lack of confidence to use the new language even worse. That was a really hard thing to go over with.

The party time was another situation for the newcomers to experience language shock. Mr. A (senior) mentioned that at the first year of being in Canada, there were many parties held by the university. He found that most of the time, he felt very uncomfortable in those parties because he felt difficult to find words to talk to other people. He explained that,

> I stood there with a cup of drink in my hand. I tried to find someone to talk with but after saying hello and introducing the names, I did not know how to continue the conversation. I have realized that I should be careful not to say something which would offend others meanwhile I was also afraid that other people could not understand my English.

Mr. A's (senior) wife joined him about a year and half after his arrival and their son came to Canada about two years after Mr.A (senior). From the above, we already knew that Mrs. A did not know any English when she came to Canada. During the two years in Canada, Mrs. A never went to ESL classes to learn English. Most of the time she worked as a nanny for a Chinese family. The major work for her was to look after an old man and cook the meals. Because that family came from Shanghai in China, they spoke the Shanghai dialect at home, which seemed perfect to Mrs. A who spoke the same language. She said in the interview that,

> I felt very secure to work in that family because I did not have the pressure to speak English. I was very scared to have the pressure to speak English because I did not know to speak.

Because of this fear and for some other reasons, Mrs. A did not have the courage to seek for contact with English speaking people voluntarily.

The situation for Mr. A (junior) was slightly different. Although he was afraid to speak English during the early days of being in Canada, he seems to have overcome this feeling quickly. He said that,

> At the early days of my being in the classroom, I spent most time listening to others' talking and seldom expressed my ideas. One of the reasons was that I was afraid that my English was not good enough to express my ideas and secondly I was shy and scared to make mistakes.

However, this kind of feeling did not stay long. After a few months, Mr. A (junior) began to express himself although he was still afraid to some extent. He understood that in order to have success in his education in Canada, he had to seek for more opportunity to speak English. He worked extremely hard. Even during the summer time, he found a job in the McDonald restaurant so that he could have more time to practise his English.

Family B:

Mr. B came to Canada in August of 1986. Because at first Mr. B's status was a visiting scholar, he did not have to take any courses. The pressure for the new language was not as high as for Mr. A (senior). Mr. B worked as a medical lab technician at the University of Alberta. However he had to use English everyday, not only in speaking, but also in written form because sometimes he had to write some research reports and record some data. The people working around him were all speaking English. Therefore at first he also found it very difficult to communicate with other people. One of most scary things he experienced was to answer the phone. He described that,

> One day when he was working in the lab, the telephone rang. There were no other people around. My heart began to beat faster and faster. How should I do? I was very scared to answer the phone. The phone rang and rang so that I forced myself to pick up the phone with the shaking hand. I tried hard to listen carefully to understand but I was too afraid to understand anything. Afterwards, I did not know how to do with it. I was scared to tell my boss because I did not understood what the phone call was about, but I was also afraid that I might miss the important message. It was really hard.

Sometimes during work, Mr. B also had a difficult time to express himself, but he had no choice but to talk to his colleagues in order to keep the work going. At first it was hard because he always found himself making mistakes. However, after a while, he got used to it. He gradually built up his confidence and was not so scared to make mistakes. One of the reasons that made him get over the difficulty quickly, he mentioned, was that he was familiar with the work he was doing. Although English was a barrier, with the knowledge he had and all the concrete things in the lab, it became a lot easier for him to communicate with other people.

Mrs. B arrived in Canada a year and half later. She came to Canada with their daughter who was at that time in grade three. When Mrs. B came to Canada, the spouses of foreign students were not allowed to work anywhere in Canada. Mrs. B was very enthusiastic to learn English. Mrs. B said that at the beginning she was quite interested in studying English because she thought it was a very good opportunity to learn this language, which most of the Chinese people did not have. Here there were a lot of chances to be exposed to English, such as TV, newspaper, and books, and people speaking English all around. Therefore, soon after she arrived in Canada, she bought a bicycle which she used to move around. She went to ESL classes at the Alex Taylor school which was designed especially for the new immigrants. She also went to some drop-in classes downtown. She said that at first she spent almost the whole morning taking classes. In the afternoon, she stayed at home doing some homework and house work, such as preparing dinner for the family. Later on she went to AVC evening classes which were two hours each day from Monday to Thursday.

Although sometimes at the beginning of being in Canada she was afraid to use English, this did not become a serious problems for her. She said that,

> I like to talk to people. I realized that if I wanted to learn English well, I had to speak. I believed that it was ok to make some mistakes. I could learn from making mistakes.

Not long after her arrival in Canada, she had many friends including Chinese friends and Canadian friends.

Miss B went to Edmonton Public School after she came to Canada. She did not take any ESL classes although when she came she did not know any English. She went to a regular grade three class with only one Chinese student in her class. That girl could speak some Chinese, which was a great help for Miss B.

Miss B recalled her first experiences in the Canadian school and said that she did not find it very stressful learning English although she did not have any English previously. The first few days in school were hard because she did not know what she was expected to do, where the bathroom was, what the teacher taught in class and so on. But she soon figured out the routines of the class and followed the teachers by watching what the other students did. She described that,

> During the recess time, I played with other students. Although I did not understand what they were saying, we still played with them nicely. I repeated what they said to me and tried to figure out the meaning which was not very difficult.

After a few months, Miss B said that she could use English to do the very basic communication. She had more friends to play with and most of them were Canadians. After a few years in Canada, she spoke more English than Chinese even at home.

In summary, it is clear to see that when people come to a new culture, they will have some fears, be shy or feel scared about communicating with other people in the new language. This kind of feeling is a barrier for them to acquire the new language because this feeling will stop learners from contacting with other people, and as a result, they will practise the new language less. However, the degree of this feeling will be different from person to person. From these two families, we can see that Mrs. A feared the most to try the new language so she felt very secure and comfortable just working for the Chinese family, but the children from these two families were better able to deal with the language shock. Although they still felt shy and scared at first, they got over this feeling quickly.

4.2.3 Culture Shock

The west and east have their own cultures. The way of living, the way of thinking, and the way of speaking are all different. It will cause a lot of problems if a person comes to a totally new culture without knowing its culture and language. This is the situation for most of the Chinese students, especially their spouses. These problems built up some frustrated feelings which might be called "culture shock". Brown (1987) states that culture shock is associated with a feeling in the learners of estrangement, anger, hostility, indecision, frustration, unhappiness, sadness, loneliness, homesickness and even physical illness.

Such frustrations usually turn to two different kinds of motive to learn English. One is total rejection in which case these people cannot stand such hardship and frustration, and finally hold very negative attitudes toward the whole society. The other one is very positive so that after experiencing all these frustrations and difficulties, these people are determined to change their situation by learning more about the culture and the language of this new world. They know that in order to survive in this society, they have to be strong. One of the most important things they have to do, which is very clear to every one, is to learn English. Therefore, these frustrations and difficulties turn out to be very positive.

The following will present the experiences of culture shock these two families had and how these experiences affect their second language acquisition.

Family A:

The data shows that Family A had many difficulties and problems in their living, working and studying in Canada, which caused a lot of frustrations, sadness and loneliness during the past years. Among these difficulties, Mr. A (senior) mentioned that there were two things which really depressed him and were most difficult to deal with.

The first was the lack of language ability which brought him failure in his academic career. Mr. A (senior) came to Canada as a master's students. Before he came to Canada, he did not have the chance to take the TOEFL test which is the requirement for foreign graduate students to get their degrees in Canada. Therefore, soon after Mr. A (senior) started his course work at the university, he was asked to attend an English course at the Faculty of Extension. The purpose of this course was to improve his English so that he could take the TOEFL test. Mr. A said that he spent almost one year and a half taking these English courses which he thought helped him improve his English a lot. However, he could not manage to pass that test although he worked very hard and tried many times. He said in the interview,

> I was getting so frustrated with the TOEFL test because I had studied very hard and tried many times each of which cost me about fifty US dollars, but every time, the score was just a few points away from the passing line.

After many trials, Mr. A (senior) lost his confidence and he gave up hope. Since he could not pass the TOEFL test, Mr. A (senior) could not stay in his master's program. So later on he had to change his status from a master's student to a diploma student. He felt very sorry and disappointed about himself but he said, "What could I do about this and I had to face the reality".

Besides Mr. A (senior) worrying about passing the TOEFL test to keep his master's program alive, he also worried about his course work at the same time. He spent most of his day at his office or home reading and writing. Reading and writing were very hard for him. He said that,

> I had too much materials to read for the course work. Even a very short article took me hours and hours to read because there were many new words and I had to find them out from the dictionary and then to figure out the meaning.

He showed the researcher some of the articles and the side of papers were full of small Chinese characters. In order to finish all his homework, Mr. A (senior) slept less hours to make the time for his slow work. Sometimes he could not fall asleep. When asked why he worried so much about his study, he said that,

> If I could not pass all the courses, I could not obtain the degree and, most importantly, I probably would not be able to get the financial support from the CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency) the following year. Therefore, I would probably be required to return back to China.

After three years studying at the University of Alberta, he neither received the masters degree nor the diploma certificate. Mr. A (senior) said, "This is the first failure I have ever had in my life. I feel so embarrassed in the presence of other Chinese students who I know, but what can I do?."

Another frustration and sadness was from searching for jobs. At the beginning of his being in Canada, a job was not a problem for him because at that time foreign students were not allowed to work in Canada except within the university. Because Mr. A (senior) was entitled to collect a scholarship from university, he did not have to worry about making money. What he had to do was to finish his degree, save as much money as he could and then go back to China. However after the Tiananmen Square political crisis (June 4th, 1989), most Chinese students, including Mr. A (senior), applied to stay in Canada as landed immigrants. Since then, one of the major concerns for the Chinese students was the job because the status of those Chinese students changed and they were allowed to work anywhere in Canada. In order to make more money, more and more students started to look for jobs. Because of the area Mr. A (senior) studied, there were not many jobs available. He said that he sent out many applications but the responses were all negative. He looked for a job for about two years, yet he still couldn't find one. In order to support his family and save more money, he had to do some simple jobs. He worked in an electronic games store with the pay of $6 per hour for a long time. He worked the night shift from midnight to the early morning because that was the time nobody wanted to work, but he was still considered as a lucky person to fill this position. He hoped that he could find a good job some day, and then he could quit this job. Unfortunately, during about two years and a half, he was not able to find one. He had to continue to work in that store.

He worried that it would get more and more difficult for him to find a good job because he was getting older and older. The older he got, the more difficult it would become. Even now he is still struggling with this.

He continued to search for a job; something related to his field. However, he was not sure what would be the future for him. When he heard some other students found jobs, he felt very upset about himself.

For Mrs. A, the situation was even worse because she did not know any English. She mentioned several occasions of bad feelings she experienced. The major goal was to find a job. When Mrs. A came to Canada, she was entitled to work anywhere in Canada. However, because of the lack of language, she had a very limited job market to choose from. At the beginning of her days in Canada, she tried several jobs, but soon she was fired.

First, she found a dishwashing job at a Chinese restaurant. Because the manager found that she couldn't work fast, she was fired.

Second she found a job washing cars. She worked there only for one day. Then she was fired because she couldn't communicate with her colleagues.

Third, she tried another job at a Chinese sewing factory. After she worked there for about a week, she got fired again. This made her really mad. She said,

> All these jobs I tried to find were labour work, but even for this kind of work, I still couldn't get it. In China, I worked as a technician in a big factory, which was a more complicated work. But now the most simple job was still hard to find.

When she compared herself with what she was doing in China, she felt sad and very disappointed.

Another frustration she had was from the contact with other colleagues and the manager during the work. She said that she was so depressed when her supervisor or managers shouted at her. In that situation, she didn't understand what they talked about. She was wondering what was wrong with what she did. Sometimes she wanted to explain, but she did not know how to express herself. The only thing she could do was to put these in her heart. She explained that she could bear once or twice, but she couldn't stand it if such things happened again and again. Sometimes, she went home and cried sadly.

This kind of feeling not only happened to Mrs. A, most of the Chinese students' spouses have had similar experiences. When talking to Chinese students or their spouses, almost every one said the same things. They cried at least two or three times because of hurt feelings from their work.

Due to all these frustrations, Mrs. A lost confidence in herself. She found satisfaction in the job as a nanny with the Chinese family. It was not so stressful although the pay was very low. Everything in this family was the same as those Mrs. A had in China, the culture and the language. Therefore, she felt very comfortable and secure staying in this family. But sometimes, she felt very lonely working in that family because most of the time she was with the old man in that family and there was not much to talk about between them.

Mr. A (junior) did not specify the particular feeling he had. The most difficult time he had was at the beginning of school in Canada. He knew that his English was poor and he worried about how he could catch up with the other students who were born here and had excellent English. Except for the lack of English, he was also new to the Canadian School system. He did not know the curriculum, the way of learning and teaching of Canadians, the regulations of the school and so on. He said that during the first few days at school he was totally lost. However, it did not take him long to adjust to the Canadian school system.

Another difficult thing for him was to choose the area which he should focus on when he went to university. He said that because his father had different opinions with him, it was hard to make the final decision. On the other hand, this dilemma also reflected the difference between the two cultures. In Canada, people have more freedom to choose whatever they like to do. This usually produces some problems for the people who usually do not have such choices. In China, usually parents have the power to make big decisions for their children. If children have some different ideas, they still have to listen to their parents. In some situations, parents have the right to choose who will be the husband or wife for their children. Although this culture is changing gradually, it still has a strong influence on the thinking of Chinese people. Therefore, the conflict between Mr. A (senior) and Mr. A (junior) about the field Mr. A (junior) should take became a real difficulty for them. Finally, Mr. A (junior) obeyed his father and took science at the university.

Family B:

During almost six years in Canada, Mr. B could nor recall the particular occasions which made him frustrated. Since he came to Canada, he has been working in the same lab which appears to be his safe home. Even during the time when he took courses for his masters degree, he still worked in this lab. After he graduated with his masters degree, he found a permanent job working in the same lab. He felt very happy living in Canada. he said, "Everything here is great in comparison with China".

The most difficult time, he felt, was when he applied to do his masters degree because he had to pass the TOEFL test with 600, and also when he wrote his thesis. He said that,

> To write a thesis in English was really a challenge for me. I spent hours and hours in the office writing and rewriting. Sometimes, I want to express some ideas. Although it is in

> my mind, I do not know how to put it down in words. It really makes me mad, but I have to live with it. This is hard.

Mr. B had the same problem as Mr. A (senior) to prepare for the TOEFL test. At first he thought that it would not be very difficult to pass the test since he had been in Canada for a few years and his English should be good enough. But after his first try, he realized that it was not as easy as he thought. He spent more time at home doing the practise test and went to AVC (Alberta Vocational Center) to take some TOEFL courses. Then he tried again for a few more times, but he never reached the score of 600. "That was really a pressure on me," said Mr. B. He began to get frustrated and upset because he knew the consequences and understood how important it was for him to pass the test. He said,

> If I could not pass the test, I could not get into the master's program and if I could not get the master's degree, I would miss the opportunity to get the permanent job which was offered to me by the research center where I was working because the master's degree was the condition for the job offer. It was really hard and I never had such hard time.

Finally, he reached the score of 586 which was very close to the requirement of 600, but he still did not meet the requirement. Mr. B lost his confidence and became frustrated. Later, his supervisor made a suggestion to the university to accept Mr. B into the master's program based on his ability which was shown during the past three years and he was accepted.

Another difficult time was at home. Since his wife and his daughter came to Canada, he had to take care of them, especially, at the beginning. Because at that time Mrs. B and Miss B were not able to communicate in English, they had to totally rely on Mr. B. Wherever they went, Mr. B had to go with them. This was not too bad for him. What he had to do was just to spend some time with them. The most difficult time was when his wife was not happy with her job and got emotionally hurt during the work, which happened quite often. In that situation, his wife came home and cried and sometimes they would have a fight. Then Mr. B would have a difficult time at home because he had to find a job for her or he had to persuade her or calm her down. "That was a hard job" said Mr. B. However, Mr. B handled these things very well. He knew that working hard and keeping the family in unity were very important for them to survive in this society.

Mrs. B has been in Canada for more than four years. Generally speaking, she has been happy with Canada, but sometimes she also got upset and frustrated.

First, said Mrs. B, was to find an appropriate and secure job. Her English was better than Mrs. A, but it was still not easy. Before coming to Canada, she was a medical doctor, which was considered as a very good job in China. But here in Canada, she couldn't do the same work. Therefore, she had to find some simpler job. This was a great change for her. She said once,

> In China, I worked as a medical doctor in the hospital, but now I had to do everything from cleaning lady to helping patients take showers and eat. Sometimes I just could not believe what I was doing. This change was really hard on me.

Sometimes Mrs. B felt frustrated and very uncomfortable in the work . One night, she went to work at an old lady's home as the home care person. During the shift, a lady wanted to take some medicine and asked Mrs. B to get some water. Mrs. B went to get the medicine and a cup of cold water. To her surprise, this old lady suddenly became so angry and said to Mrs. B, "Did you understand English? I asked you to get warm water. Why do you get me cold water". This unexpected situation caused Mrs. B not to know how to respond because she said that she did not hear the word "warm". But it was very hard for her to explain clearly. She thought that even when she made a mistake, this lady should not treat her like that. When she got home, she cried and felt badly. Later on Mrs. B explained that such an event happened not only once in her work. It seems that most Chinese spouses have similar experiences. Mrs. B admitted that one of the major reasons for these problems was the language.

Mrs. B wondered how she could avoid all these problems. One of the important things, said Mrs. B, was to solve the problem of communication. She was determined to learn English as soon as possible. She looked for every opportunity to improve her English by attending different English classes and making English friends.

Miss B mentioned that the most difficult time for her was when she first came to Canada. At the beginning of her schooling in Canada, she did not know English so she had to rely on the help of another Chinese student in the same class, who knew a little more English than her. Sometimes she was frustrated because she found that she did not know what was happening around her. She said, "At that time, I felt that the school was not fun, interesting and I did not like it very much." But this situation did not last long. As soon as she picked up some English, this frustrated feeling went away. She had more friends to play with and she knew what she should do. She said that not long after she went to school, she had a very good Canadian friend in her class. They often visited each other and went out to do some recreational activities, such as swimming in summer and skating and sometimes skiing in winter. Soon, she learned a lot of English from her. Therefore, it seems that the adjustment to a new culture was not difficult for her. Her mother mentioned that Miss B had become more Canadian than Chinese. For example, Miss B liked Canadian food after a few years of being in Canada, such as hamburg, French-fries, pizza, but not rice any more, and McDonald's restaurant has become her favourite place to eat.

In summary, from the above presentation, it is easy to see that people get different kinds of frustrations and bad feelings when they come to a new culture. These feelings resulted from all kinds of incidents depending upon the individuals. The attitudes towards these feelings might also be different from individual to individual. These different attitudes have influence acquiring the new language. The data also indicates that children are different from adults in coping with the new culture.

4.2.4 Turning Point

When Mr. A's family and Mr. B's family came to Canada, no one thought that they would be able to stay in Canada as landed immigrants although Mr. B had some hope or intention. What they thought was to see the new world, get the degree, and save some money. It was also a great opportunity for them to learn some English except for Mrs. A. Therefore in the first years of being in Canada, they were busy trying to reach their own goals.

Mrs. A tried to find a job to earn some money soon after arriving in Canada and she did not have any interest in learning English. When asked why she did not try to study English, Mrs. A gave several reasons; 1. she thought she was too old to learn a new language; 2. she did not have time because she had to work every day to earn money which seemed most important to her; 3. she did not see the need to learn English because she thought that even if she did not know English she still could take the bus to go work and to go to the grocery store; and 4. she did not see any need of English when she went back to China. She believed that she was just a visitor in Canada and did not expect to stay in Canada for a long time.

On the opposite, Mrs. B took being in Canada as a great opportunity to learn English. As soon as she arrived in Canada, she looked for some English classes to learn English as described earlier. To find a job to make some money was also an important agenda for her. Soon after, Canada changed the immigration policy to allow foreign students' spouses to work in Canada. Mrs. B began to work, but meanwhile, she did not give up the opportunity to learn English and enroled in evening classes.

During 1989, there was a series of pro-democratic movements in China. At the beginning of June, the political movement became a crisis. The Chinese government used the army forces to clear up Tiananmen Square which pro-democratic students occupied for the protest. During that crisis, many people were killed and arrested. During that period, the Canadian government carried out a new policy allowing Chinese students to apply for landed immigrant status in Canada and most of them did. There was no exception for Mr. A and Mr. B's families. Everyone was very clear that it meant that they would stay in Canada for a long time. This really became a turning point for these two families as the milestone in their whole life, which had a great impact on their future.

However, during the process of approval of their application to be landed immigrants, Mrs. A still did not feel that she should learn English. She said that she wanted to wait for the final approval then she might try to learn English because it was at that time that she was sure that she would stay in Canada for a long time.

Mrs. B was not as cautious as Mrs. A. After she applied for landed immigrant status, she made a plan of what she wanted to do if she stayed in Canada for a long time or maybe for her whole life time. There were two things which seemed very important to her; being professional and independent. She said in the interview that,

> Now it seems that I will stay in Canada for a long time and I do not know how long it will be. Therefore, I should have some plans about my future. First I want to find some jobs which relate to what I was trained in China, and second I want to be more independent and have more freedom. I cannot always be at home without any contact with outside world and rely on my husband. To reach those goals, I have to learn more English.

About two years after their application, both families obtained the official title of landed immigrants in Canada. The interesting thing was that soon after Mrs. A received her status as a landed immigrant, she felt that she should learn English. She stated,

> By then I was pretty sure that she would stay in Canada for a long time so that I had to learn English. Otherwise it will be very difficult for me.

At this time, Mrs. A realized the importance of learning English and began to show dissatisfaction with her job as a nanny in the Chinese family. She said,

> If I do not know English, it is impossible to find a better job, which means that I have to stay in that Chinese family as a nanny, but I am not happy with it. Although I am close to 50's, I still need to do something different in my future.

Mrs. A quit her nanny job and applied for study at the government sponsored ESL program. She spent four months finishing the first period of study. Afterwards she continued the second period lasting another four months. She then went back to the Chinese family to work again. After a few months, she felt that she should go back to study more English and spent another four months in the ESL program.

When she was asked how she was doing in the English classes, she replied, "it is a hard job and probably I am too old to learn a new language". Although she claimed that she was the lowest student in her class and she had very low confidence about herself to learn English, she seemed to show some enthusiasm about her English learning. In order to practise some English and also show how much she had learned, she spoke some simple sentences in English during the interview. This was a great achievement to her.

Mrs. B took similar steps as Mrs. A. She heard that at AVC, there was a class to train nurses-aids, which was sponsored by the government but students had to reach a certain English level. In order to enter into that class, Mrs. B reduced her work load to a minimum in her job so that she could have more time to study English. She thought it was very important for her because she knew that it was impossible for her to be a doctor as she did in China but it was still good if she could become a nurse which was related to her profession. She said that it was better than just doing the simple physical work. Finally, her English reached the required level and she got into the program which was designed to train nurses-aid personnel.

The status change did not affect Mr. B very much, but he felt very happy because that was his hope before. Now he did not have to worry about going back to China. Mr. A (senior) and Mrs. A had mixed feelings about this status change. First they did not feel excited like other Chinese students because they thought that Canada did not have a good future for them. On the other hand, they were also happier. They explained that Canada had a much better education system than China. They hoped that they could stay so that their son could finish his high school and then go to a good university. If in China, it would be very difficult for their son to enter a good university because there was too much competition. Therefore, they planned to provide full support to their son. Mr. A (senior) mentioned that when everything was settled for their son, then they would decide their own future.

Regarding the possible future they might have, Mr. A (senior) described,

> I do not see that there is a good future for us in Canada. The only hope is that our son can complete his university and find a good job. For me and my wife, we hope that during the time our son is in school, we can earn some money and try to save more. After our son can be independent in his own life, we would probably go back to China because we think Canada is not the place for us although we like it.

The children from both families did not seem to be greatly influenced by this status change. They were happier and they knew that they had to study even harder, but there was not a dramatic change in their life.

In summary, June 4th, 1989 seems to have been the turning point for both families when their status in Canada was changed from students and visitors to landed immigrants. This change had a great impact on these two families, especially for Mrs. A and Mrs. B. Although the impact was different for each member in these two families, it raised their desire to learn English to a higher level.

4.2.5 Changes of Beliefs and Values

When people go to a new world, sooner or later, they will have some changes due to their personal experiences, and the influences of this new world upon their families. However, some people will adjust faster than others, depending upon their background and beliefs. This is the same for these two Chinese families. The following will show the changes of their beliefs and values towards this new world - Canada.

The previous studies have indicated that the attitudes toward the target language group is an important factor for second language learners to acquire that language because it decides the way the second language learners approach the target language group. If they have a positive attitude, the second language learners are probably more willing to have more contact with the target language group, or vice versa. The different types of contact might influence second language acquisition.

China and Canada are quite different in terms of political systems, culture and the way people are living. People from China to Canada often have some scary feeling at first. Western countries are always a mystery for Chinese people. One of the reasons is probably that they had too much education from the communist party. During the period when China had a "closed-door" policy, the party taught people that capitalist countries were evil where there were many bad things in that society, such as murder, exploitation, and all kinds of crimes. Even now when China has opened its door to the west, the security people still warn those people who are going to the western countries that they should be very careful when talking to other people because there are a lot of bad people there, such as spies who work for the enemies and want to destroy the Communist party in China. Education like this builds a fear in those people which prevents them from making contact with the target language group. There is no exception for these two families.

Attitude Change

Mr. A (senior) indicated this in the interview and he said,

> Before coming to Canada, I heard a lot about western countries, especially the United States. I saw a lot of murdering on the TV and the newspapers. I was told that eastern countries were not safe countries because there were all kinds of people there, bad and good, rich and poor. Money was very important and in the first place and there was no real human friendship there. Even within a family, all the relationship was money and there were no real relationship between children and their parents.

Therefore, this perception about the western countries really scared Mr. A (senior) when he was ready to come to Canada. He thought that he did not have any friends and relatives in Edmonoton and if he had some problems, who could he ask for help. But after he came to this capitalist country - Canada, he gradually found that things were not as scary as what he was told and thought. He said, "Most people here are very nice and friendly". He gave one example that when he arrived in Edmonton, his supervisor came to the international airport to meet him and then took him to her home to have a rest. His supervisor helped him to find a rental place to live the next day. Mr. A said that he did not have any scary feeling but rather a warm feeling because he received a lot of help and a warm welcome from his supervisor. Mr. A (senior) admitted that Canada might be one of the best countries in the world to live.

Mrs. A had the same kind of scary feeling as Mr. A (senior) or even worse because of the language problems. However this feeling changed to some degree after she stayed in Canada for a period of time. One example given by Mrs. A described another story she personally experienced. This happened at the first days in Canada. One day she felt bored at home alone because her husband went to the university, therefore she decided to take a short walk around where they lived. When she came to an intersection which did not have any traffic lights, she stopped and watched around to see whether there were any cars. She saw a few cars approach the intersection, so she waited until the intersection was clear. To her surprise, all the cars suddenly stopped. She did not know what had happened and just waited where she was. After a while, one of the drivers could see that she wanted across the street and waved his hand to show her that she could walk across. But Mrs. A did not realize this and wondered why this driver was waving his hand at her. "Did I do something wrong?", thought Mrs. A. By this time, the driver got out of his car and was walking towards her. She felt scared because she did not know what this man wanted to do with her but she stood there without moving. By this time, the driver came to her and showed her that she might cross the street by using his gestures. Finally Mrs. A realized that all the cars stopped in order to let her cross the street first. She felt very surprised and uncomfortable but meanwhile she was deeply moved by this. She explained that she never thought that in Canada cars would wait for people because in China cars always go through first and people have to wait. Therefore she applied the Chinese rule in Canada but to her surprise this rule did not work. She began to realize that people in Canada are not bad but are nice.

Family B experienced the similar change after staying in Canada for a few years. When asked whether they liked Canada, they responded differently. Mr.B and Miss B both answered that they liked Canada. Both agreed that Canada is the best country in the world to live. Mrs. B explained that at first she did not like Canada very much, but now she has changed. She thought Canada probably was the best place to live.

When asked why she did not like Canada at the beginning, she said that when she first came to this world, she did not know this country very much and she felt that everything was very difficult for her. For example, explained Mrs. B, her English was not good so she had to rely on Mr. B to do everything. Second, the job was too difficult for her. The first job she got was working as a chamber-maid in a hotel and that was a very hard job compared to what she had done in China. There were too many things to worry about in order to make life better, especially the job which was not very secure. In China she had an "iron-bowl[1]" job which means a life-time guaranteed job so that life can be much easier.

After a few years of hard work, everything became more stable and her English improved a lot. Now she is more independent. She can do everything by herself without any help from her husband. She felt more and more comfortable living in Canada. Therefore, she said that she likes Canada now.

Mr. B and Mrs. B also had the same experiences as Family A about the image of Canada. In China, they heard a lot about western countries. Mr. B said that mainly there were two images. One was that in western countries, people were very rich and life there was just wonderful like living in "Heaven". People could make a lot of money there. This was the image about the western countries during the period that the Chinese government had an open-door policy. Another image, said Mr. B, probably resulted from the education of the Communist regime. For a long time, the Communist Party taught people that socialism was the best society in which people owned the country and there was the best relationship in this society. People were also taught that capitalism was the worst. In capitalist countries, rich people exploited poor people so there was not a normal human relationship there. What people cared about was money. They were selfish, crude, helpless, etc. Although not everyone in China believes this, especially since China opened its door to the west, it has left a deep impression on the Chinese people. Mr. B said that before he came to Canada, he had a question mark in his mind about what the Communist Party taught him although he did not think this was true.

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[1] Iron-bowl is a term which is used to describe the Communist system in China. In China, all the jobs were guaranteed just like an iron-bowl which would not be broken. However, there are some changes now. Although most jobs are still guaranteed, some are not.

After having been in Canada for a few years, their previous images about the western world have been completely changed. Mr. B and Mrs. B said that their personal experiences in Canada had indicated that it was just the opposite from their previous images. At first they thought it was very easy to make money in Canada, but they have found it was not true. Mrs. B elaborated that it was true that the pay in Canada was much higher than the pay in China, but people had to work really hard to get it. After working in Canada for a few years, Mrs. B had a deep feeling about this.

Furthermore, they have realized that although most people in Canada drive nice cars and have houses, people borrow a lot of money from the bank. Mr. B told a story. One day his friend gave him a ride home. On the way, Mr. B said to his friend that "You have a very nice car". Then his friend replied that, "This is not my car, it belongs to the bank". At first Mr. B did not understand what his friend was talking about, but later he knew what it meant. One of the misunderstandings here is probably the result of a cross-culture barrier. In China people will not buy things if they don't have enough money. They think that it is not good to borrow money to buy things. But in Canada, the belief is different. Someone would say that the more money one can borrow the more credit he has. It is good.

Considering the attitudes toward Canadian people, Mr. B mentioned that people in Canada were not as bad as what they were heard in China. Actually, they found that Canadian people were very nice. They were understanding, helpful, caring, and friendly. They said wherever they went they always heard the words "thank you" and "please". Sometimes they received some help from Canadian people, but the Canadian people still said to them "Thank you". At first, they were confused because they thought they should give the thanks to the Canadian people who helped them, not the other way around. They said in China the words "thank you" and "please" were not very often used. After a few years of experience in Canada, they witnessed that their previous image about Canadian people was wrong.

Recently, Mrs. B made a trip to China to see her old mother and other family members. When asked what she thought about this trip, she said, "The trip is very nice, but I don't want to go back again". She explained some reasons. One reason was that people in China now were not as nice as the people in Canada. Under the Chinese open-door and economic reform policy, people tried every means to grasp money, which was just like what she was told before about people in western countries by the Communist Party, or even worse. Second was the living environment. Living in Canada, she felt very peaceful and comfortable and there was not very much air pollution. In China, she found she could not stand the crowd of people and dirty air. She said she was very seriously sick during her visit. The other was the service. Mrs. B described that the service in China was really bad. One day, she went to a store and she saw a pair of shoes on the top of the shelf. She asked a clerk to take them down and have a look. To her surprise, the clerk said to her that the shoes were placed too high and she could not reach them. Mrs. B said to her, "You did not even try. How do you know it is too high". This clerk looked at Mrs. B and then walked away. This made Mrs. B really mad and she said, "What can I do about it? In Canada, I have never met such experience and clerks in the store are always polite to me". Mr. B explained that they should not blame the clerk in China but rather the social system which made these problems. If asking Mrs. B to tell more, she would go on and on - - - .

Value Change

When talking about values, there might be many different perceptions. In this section, value refers to the perception of these two families toward money and their jobs. This seems a very sensitive issue for all Chinese students or new immigrants which indicates their beliefs about their life in this new society.

The adjustment to the money value was very slow for Family A. Mr. A (senior) mentioned that at first when he went shopping, he always converted the price here to the Chinese dollars. Quite often, he found the thing here was too expensive. He was so afraid to buy things. For example, if he bought one pound of mushrooms in the Superstore, it would cost him about $2 which is the same as about 10 Chinese dollars. He immediately thought that he had to work two days in China to earn 10 Chinese dollars. It was too expensive. Mr. A's family kept this perception for a long time. Even now, they say that they do the same thing. Therefore they are always very careful about how they spend money. Mr. & Mrs. A has been here for almost six years, but they purchased their first used car just a year ago. Most other Chinese students usually buy cars a couple of years later because they think cars here are daily, necessary things. If they had a family, they would buy a car immediately. But during the first five years, Family A used bicycles and buses as the main transportation method. Mr. A (senior) said this was cheaper. They did not go anywhere except to Vancouver where Mr. A's sister lives. They bought very few new things. Most things they bought were from garage sales or used stores. Recently they have bought a new TV and a VCR which were the only new items they bought in Canada. They said they tried to work hard and save more for their future.

Family B have a quite different belief about money although during the first years of being in Canada they used similar strategies when they purchased things by converting Canada dollars to Chinese dollars. But after their application for landed immigrant status had been approved, their attitude towards money was getting closer to the Canadians. They explained that before they tried to save as much as possible because they hoped that when the time came for them to go back to China, they would have enough money to use for the rest of their lives without any worry. Now they plan to stay here for a long time or even a lifetime, they do not have to save money. What they need now is balance in their life, that is, they need to save enough money for emergency use but also they want to enjoy life. Mr. B explained that they were almost in their 40's and if they did not try to enjoy life now, they would feel sorry when they became older. Therefore their money value has changed a lot. They never convert the Canadian dollar to Chinese dollars any more when they purchase things. They said that during the last year or so, they have bought a brand new car. They were the first one of the few Chinese students who bought their own house. They have done a lot of camping and they began to play some Canadian traditional sports activities, such as baseball, bowling, fishing and biking. What ideas are in their mind to do these? Mr. B said that if they did not borrow money to buy these things, they would have to wait until they saved enough money. If that was the case, they probably had to wait another 10 or more years. By that time, they would be old and it would be too late for them to enjoy life. As long as they have the ability to pay the interest on the money they borrowed, why not? They admitted that their ideas were closer to Canadians.

Another great change is about the comfort of their jobs in Canada. For most Chinese students and their spouses, they were well educated and had very good jobs in China, most of them were professors, doctors and engineers. When they came to Canada, the situation had a great change. They lost their previous social positions. They had to do whatever was available, for example, working as dishwashers, waitresses and waiters in restaurants, chambermaids in hotels, building cleaners, food deliverers and so on. And this became extremely difficult for them to get used to. Almost everyone, especially the spouses, were emotionally hurt because of their jobs during the beginning years in Canada. Getting used to this change is a very difficult task and different people would also be different. For some people it might take shorter time but for some people it would take a long time. Some people held positive attitude towards this difficulty and some people are very negative.

It is the same situation for these two families. Mr. A (senior) was a professor in a university and his wife was a technician in China. Mr. B was a professor and researcher and his wife was a doctor. But their social status has changed since they came to Canada, particularly for the wives in these two families.

Mr. B did not have great changes because when he came to Canada he had always been working in a medical lab of the university. His social position was almost the same as the one he had in China. But Mr. A (senior) was different. When Mr. A (senior) was still studying at the university, he found a job working in an electronic games store with a very low pay. However, Mr. A (senior) did not get frustrated although he said that this job was not good. One of the reasons was that Mr. A (senior) just wanted to make extra money and he did not intend to work there for a long time. Later Mr. A (senior) realized that it was extremely hard for him to find a professional work and then he began to feel the frustration. He said,

> I cannot imagine how my life would look like if I work in that electronic game store for the rest of my life.

Mr. A (senior) tried hard to find professional work for himself but he did not succeed. Now he has moved to eastern Canada with the hope that he will find something there. This was very difficult for Mr. A (senior). That might be one of the reasons why he thought he would go back to China.

The frustration about the job is worse for Mrs. A and Mrs. B. As mentioned earlier, Mrs. A failed many jobs which she thought were not as good as the one she had in China. Although she had some satisfaction working as a nanny in the Chinese family, it was momentary, which means that if she worked as a nanny temporarily it was all right but if she worked as a nanny for the rest of her life it would be very difficult for her to accept.

Mrs. B seems to have most difficulty in the change of her profession. She felt very uncomfortable when she was working as a chambermaid in the hotel and a homecare person because she always compared her present job with the job she did in China as a doctor. However, after a period of time of being in Canada she realized that it was virtually impossible for her to be a doctor in Canada. Therefore she thought if she could do some work related to her profession it would be good. Since then she has tried very hard to learn English with the hope that it would be good enough to allow her to take a program to become a nurse aid. Finally Mrs. B reached the required level and she got into the government sponsored program which was designed to train nursing-aid personnel.

The data indicates that the change of social status when coming into a new world is a real challenge for these two families, especially for the wives. However as the time past, their frustration about this change reduced gradually, but the speed and the degree would varied from person to person. Mr. B said once,

> We have to face the reality. We cannot apply the Chinese social norms to Canada. I saw a program on TV which shows that a Ph.D degree holder became a taxi driver. This cannot be believed in China. But this is the reality in Canada. We have to get ready to do everything to survive in this society.

Mrs. B seems to have had the most positive attitude towards this situation. She was determined to learn English well so that she could find a good job. Mrs. A felt helpless in face of this frustration. Although she tried to learn some English after her landed immigrant status was granted, she still did not have the confidence to be successful in this society. She said,

> What I hope is that my son could go to a good university and then find a good job after graduation. Meanwhile, I try to make as much money as I can and then go back to China.

In summary, from the above, it is clear that both families have made some changes since they came to Canada, especially since their application for landed immigrant status. However, the changes for Family A have been much slower than for Family B although there are some similarities between these two families. The changes include their beliefs, values, and attitudes toward Canadian society and people and their thoughts and plans about their future. It should be noticed that the children in both families are different from their parents in facing these changes. Although there are still some changes in themselves after coming to this new world, it seems that they are now more flexible.

4.2.6 Attachment to the Ethnic Group

Shumann (1986) claimed that second language acquisition would be maximized if the second language learners' group is in the position of dominance, assimilation, having a small population, and having a similar culture to that of the target language group and openness to the target language group. In another words, if second language learners have more attachment to their own ethnic group, their second language acquisition will be minimized and the reverse will also be true. Previous studies have shown that it is very difficult to verify this statement because it is hard to measure the variables based on the group. This study also shows the confusion of this statement. The following presents some finding to see how this attachment to the ethnic group influences second language acquisition.

First of all, it is clear that the Chinese culture is quite different from the Canadian culture in terms of ideologies, languages and beliefs. Taking the language for example, Chinese is a totally different language system compared to English whether in its sound or writing. That is why people said that it is much easier for people from Germany or France to learn English than the Chinese people.

In terms of population, according the numbers from the newspaper, it is estimated that there are about 40,000 Chinese living in Edmonton. These people live all around the city. People used to say that there are a lot of people living in Castle Downs and China-town areas, but actually, you can see Chinese people everywhere in the city. During the first years of being in Canada, Mr. A (senior) and Mr. B shared the house with other Chinese students. When their families came to Canada, they soon moved out and lived in the place where there were not many Chinese people. For example, Mr. B bought a town house in an area where there were few Chinese people and Mr. A's family moved to an apartment where they worked as caretakers and there were no Chinese people living in that building.

Did this living condition and the Chinese population have some influence on their second language acquisition? It is very difficult to make any judgement. Although they live in the place where there are more Canadians, this does not mean that it is necessary for them to have more contact with English speaking people. They might still have a lot of contact with the Chinese people. The data shows that Family B had many Chinese friends and also Canadian friends as well but Family A had few Chinese friends and Canadian friends.

How did these two families' members see themselves after they had been staying in Canada for so many years? For both children, when they were asked who they were, they would answer they were Canadians. But for the parents, the answer was different. Mr. A said in the interview that,

> Although I am in Canada for many years and now I became a landed immigrant, I am still a Chinese.

Mr. B and Mrs. B recently worried that their daughter was going to lose the Chinese language. Mr. B said that, "Whatever the status we have, landed immigrant to Canadian citizen, we are always Chinese. We can change the status, but we cannot change our skin colour". That is why both Mr. and Mrs. B wanted their daughter to keep the Chinese which is a very important sign of their ethnic identity. During the Barcelona Olympic period, all the Family B members cheered for the Chinese team first and then for the Canadian team because they still thought they were Chinese.

However, there were some differences between these two families. Although both families had strong beliefs that they were Chinese, Mr. and Mrs. B admitted that the way of their thinking and the way of their living were closer to the Canadian style and Mr. and Mrs. A were more conservative and closer to the Chinese tradition.

In summary, it is difficult to say that the size of the population and the living environment would have great influence on second language acquisition, at least not in this study. But the openness to the target language group and willingness to accept the new culture might have some influences. This relationship is difficult to be measured on the basis of groups because it really depends on the individuals.

4.2.7 What Was Their Social Life?

This section will provide information about the social life of these two families after coming to Canada. Social life here refers to their daily life, for example, every day activity, activities during the holidays and weekends, social activities, and activities with friends.

Family A:

From the data, it is clear that Family A did not have many social activities. Their life was very simple and to some extent isolated.

When asked what kind of things they usually did every day, Mr. A (senior) answered that it was quite simple. His wife went to work in the daytime and his son went to school. Mr. A (senior) used to go to the university, but since he worked at night, he stayed at home sleeping in the morning. In the afternoon, he did some reading and some other routine things. His wife and son came home about 4 o'clock in the afternoon. After dinner, most of the time they just stayed at home, watching TV, doing some reading and talking with each other. Mr. A (senior) mentioned that it was the same most of the time.

Regarding the activities they usually did during the weekends and holidays, Mr. A explained that most of the time they did some cleaning of the house and then went to the grocery store and shopping centre. When asked whether they did some travelling or camping, they replied that they never travelled around. One of the reasons was that they did not have a car until recently. Another reason was that it cost a lot of money. Mr. A (senior) explained that they enjoyed staying home and doing family activities, such as watching TV, reading and relaxing.

This was very unusual. Most of the Chinese students and their spouses went to Banff and Jasper national parks at least once since these places are very famous. But although Mr. A's family had lived here for a few years and especially Mr. A, who had been here for about six years, they never went anywhere.

When asked about the friends they had during the past years, Mr. A replied that they had a few Chinese friends, but the contact was not very much. Whenever there was something needed to talk about, he would contact them. Mr. A also mentioned that they did not have close Canadian friends. The closest Canadian friend Mr. A had was his supervisor. But their contact was mainly based on academic activities. Another Canadian they had some contact with was the owner of the store where Mr. A worked. Other than that they did not have Canadian friends with whom they had close ties. They could not recall whether the whole family had attended any Canadian type of parties. Mr. A went to some parties in earlier days of his being in Canada but not the whole family. When asked whether they had attended a barbecue, the answer was no.

Family B:

Life for Family B was quite different from Family A. Family B were more active and their lives was much richer.

During the week, it was very much the same for both families. In the daytime, they went to work or study and in the evening, most of the time, they just stayed at home, watching TV, doing some reading and routine housework.

However, on the weekends and holidays, Family B had a lot of activities. Besides going to the grocery stores or shopping, they would attend any special events, such as watching the Klondike parade, going to the Northlands Exhibition at least once a year during Klondike days, going to Hawrelak Park on Heritage Day, and attending some events of the Fringe Festival. Some of the weekends during the summer, they went camping and fishing with their friends. Mr. B also mentioned sometimes they went to movies as well.

When asked about the friends they had, Mr. B mentioned that they had a lot of Chinese friends. Among them there were a few families with whom they had very close relations. During the past years, they have always had some activities with these families on weekends and holidays. Mr. B said that almost every week, they would gather together, playing cards, fishing, camping, going on picnics, sometimes travelling to Banff and Jasper and doing other activities. When asked why they did this, Mr. B explained that only one family doing activities was not enjoyable but if more people are involved, it is more fun.

Besides the activities among their Chinese friends, Family B also had some activities with Canadians. They mentioned that they had a Canadian family as their friend for a long time - about four years. They visited each other quite often. Sometimes, their daughters would take turns to sleep over in their home. Sometimes, if one family went travelling, they took the daughter from the other family.

Family B often went to different parties which were held by the people who were working in Mr. B's lab. Sometimes they went to Mr. B's boss's house for parties. Sometimes, they attended his colleague's wedding parties. Sometimes all the people working in that lab went out eating. Mr. B said that he never missed once.

Mr. B thought these activities were very important and socialization with other people was an important part of his work. During that activity, he could learn a lot of information, and build positive relationships with other people. That would help him to do a better job.

Miss B said that she had a lot of friends in her school. Most of them were Canadians. They not only played with each other in school but after school they would also talk with each other on the phone all the time. She also had some little Chinese friends. Most of them were her piano classmates. They gathered together every week. Miss B said that when her Chinese friends played with each other, they spoke English rather than Chinese. The only time they spoke Chinese was when they talked with their parents but not all the time.

It is very obvious that these two families had totally different social life styles. One family was very isolated. They did not have many activities or much contact with other people both Canadians and Chinese. But the other family was very active. They had a lot of contact with both Chinese and Canadians. They were out-going persons. They held and attended a variety of activities to make their lives richer.

4.2.8 What are the Language Environment for these Two Families?

To learn a second language effectively, the language environment is also an important factor. In China, why is the English training program not very successful? One of the problems is that people have no access to a variety of English sources, such as books, magazines, movies, or native English speakers. The only time students are able to have access to English is in the classroom. Even during that limited time, students hear Chinese most of the time because most of English teachers use Chinese to do the instruction. When students get out of the English classroom, most of them probably never practice what they have learned in English classes. Why is that? Language environment seems to be the important cause. There is a saying in China, "The best fish cannot live without water". Here, the water can be considered as the language environment. Someone might be a very good language learner. However, if there is no language environment as a support, it might still be very difficult for him or her to learn that language.

In this section, some information will be provided about what kind of language environment these two families had at home.

Family A

Family A lived in an apartment building where they served as a caretaker so that they received free lodging. Their duties were to clean the building, do some minor repair work to the building, mow the lawn in summer, shovel snow in winter and collect the rent from tenants. Mr. A (senior) said, "This job is simple. Basically it is a labour work although sometimes I have to talk to some people, e.g. when collecting the rent and showing empty suits to people. But it is not very often".

The suite Family A had in their apartment contained only one-bedroom and was big enough for the family of three people though Mr. A (junior) had to sleep in the living room. During the visits, it was found that there were many small pieces of paper hanging on the wall in the kitchen. Mr. A (junior) said that all these pieces belonged to him. He explained that, "I am preparing for TOEFL test. When I do the exercise test, I have found that my vocabulary is not enough so I put the words I do not know on the paper and hang them on the wall. Whenever I have time, I can read them. In this way I try to memorize these words". Here it can be seen that Mr. A (junior) still used a very traditional way to learn English which was probably brought from China.

In the living room, there was very old sofa with a coffee table in front. In the corner there were some shelves on which there were quite a few video tapes. By the side of the shelves, there was TV and VCR. When asked what all these tapes were, Mr.

A (senior) said, "Most of these tapes are Chinese movies which I recorded from the Chinese TV channel and some are recorded from the tapes of my friends." He continued by saying that, "Since we do not go out very often, we stay at home and watch TV a lot. The programs we like most are the News and the Chinese Movies. That is why we spend about thirty dollars to buy a Chinese cable TV which is very important for my wife because she does not know English. The Chinese TV become part of her life."

During the first visits, it was also noticed that the members in Family A spoke their Chinese dialect (Shanghai) all the time. Sometimes Mr. A (junior) would speak some English in order to explain something that happened in school to his father.

It was interesting to note that during the later visits more English was spoken in their conversation. It was obvious that Mrs. A tried to practice some English which she learned from her English class.

Not very many English reading materials were found around their home. Mr. A (junior) had some English books on the kitchen table, which seemed to help him prepare for the TOEFL test. Sometimes, a few English advertisements were found on the table.

Family B

Family B lived in a nice townhouse with a small yard in the front. There were three bedrooms upstairs and a recreation room in the basement. On the main floor, there was a kitchen, dining area and a living room. In the living room, there were some furniture, such as a set of quite new sofas, an old piano, a new TV and VCR, quite a few flowers and plants with some fish in the corner. From the first sight, it reveals that they lived a relatively comfortable life.

It was noted that the language used at their home varied from time to time. Mostly, they spoke Chinese (Mandarin) at home, but it was also noted that Miss B spoke more English rather than Chinese. Mr. B and Mrs. B replied mainly using Chinese but sometimes they also used English. It was quite interesting to see that during their conversations, both Chinese and English were shifting quite often automatically, especially for Miss B. Mr. B said that, "During the last couple of years, we have found the danger that our daughter might lose Chinese. When she came to Canada, her Chinese was very good. She could read and write. Speaking and listening were also very good. Now she can only write her name and read a few words in Chinese. Although her listening ability is not too bad she speaks less and less Chinese". Mrs. B said, "This really worries us because we want her to keep Chinese which is our ethnic identity. Therefore, we have decided to speak more Chinese at home and also ask our daughter to do some reading and writing of Chinese. We know it is very difficult but we have to do something."

It was also noticed that on the coffee table in the living room, there were many different kinds of English materials, such as Edmonton Journal (Daily newspaper), different advertisements, magazines and a few English books. In the kitchen, a few cooking books could be seen. When asked how much TV they usually watched, Mrs. B replied that, "We watch TV a lot, especially in the evenings. The programs we watch most are news, movies, sports and some series, such as Full House and Perfect Strangers. Sometimes we also borrow some Chinese movies from friends."

In summary, both families seem to speak Chinese at home most of the time although Family B used English slightly more than Family A. One thing which should be noted is that Miss B uses more English at home than anyone else and in order to prevent Miss B from losing her native language, her parents tried to ask her to use Chinese as much as possible at home. On the other hand, Family B seems to have more English resources and watch a greater variety of TV programs than Family A.

Summary

In this chapter, the findings of the experiences for these two Chinese families to learn English in China as well as in Canada are presented. From the findings, we can see that learning a second language is not a simple process. It involves many factors which makes this learning become a very complicated phenomenon. A detailed discussion will follow in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

In the previous chapter, the findings about the two families' experiences of learning English as a second language in Canada have been presented. In this Chapter, a discussion of these findings is made based on the research questions. Conclusions and implications will also be presented in this chapter.

5.1 Discussions

The discussion will focus on the purpose of this study, which tries to understand the second language learning process of these two Chinese families in the Canadian context with particular emphasis upon the role of cultural and social factors in second language learning. Some other affective factors will also be discussed. The discussion will consider how much English these two family members have gained during the years of their being in Canada; the important factors or variables which have an effect on their second language learning; and how the findings in this study relate to the previous studies and theories.

The original intent of this study was to investigate how cultural and social factors influence second language learning, but now the researcher realizes that it is very difficult just to focus on this area in isolation from individual factors. From these two families' experiences of learning English in their real life, there are many other variables involved in the learning process rather than just motivation. The researcher believes that other variables are also as important as motivation in second language learning so it is not wise to ignore these variables. Therefore, in the discussion, motivation is considered an important aspect but other factors, which the researcher thinks are important, will be discussed as well.

5.1.1 What are the differences between two Chinese student families regarding their progress in English since they came to Canada?

In order to find out how much improvement these two families have obtained regarding their English learning, three measurements were used: self-assessment by using questionnaires, listening comprehension by using video tape and writing samples. Another measurement which was not named in the study but the researcher thought was also an indication of their second language achievement, is how successfully the respondents performed in their real life, such as academic performance, and work performance or their general performance in this new world.

From the findings, it is not difficult to notice that when these two family members came to Canada, Mrs. A and Miss B did not know any English except for a few words. Mr. A (senior), Mr. A (junior) and Mrs. B were very similar regarding their English proficiency. Although they learned English in China for a few years and they could read something, their oral language was very limited. Mr. B seems to have been better than the rest. He could do some simple communication, read and write something if the content was related to his professional field.

After a few years of being in Canada, English proficiency for these two family members had a marked change. From the three measurements, it is easy to see that the two children from both families greatly improved in learning English. Based on the listening comprehension and writing tests, both of them were rated at the top of these two families. It should be noted that when Miss B came to Canada, she had no English at all, but now her English is at the top of these two families based on these two tests.

According to the findings from self-assessment, both children were at a very high level. Mr. A (junior) was self-rated the highest in Family B. Although Miss B was not self-rated the highest in her family (which contradicts the tests), the level she was at indicates that she still had very high English proficiency.

From the analysis of the results of the three measurements, Mr. B, Mrs. B and Mr. A (senior) also made impressive improvement. The results from the self-assessment show that Mr. B was at the top, Mrs. B was the second and Mr. A (senior) was the lowest of the three in most of the categories. However, the results from the listening and writing tests show Mr. A (senior) was not the lowest among the three. In the writing test, he ranked higher than Mr. B and Mrs. B and in the listening test he was higher than Mrs. B. This is an interesting finding. Why is there such a difference? Which measurement is correct? These questions are not easy to answer. There are several possibilities. First, why did Mr. A (senior) rate himself lower than the other two? One possibility is that Mr. A (senior) was not as self-confident as Mr. B and Mrs. B. From the findings, it is easy to see that Mr. A (senior) had many failures in his experiences in Canada but Mr. A and Mrs. B were the opposite. Second, it might be possible that the tests themselves had some problems, for example, the tests were not delivered at the same time and place. Third, the problems might result from the different background of these three people. Mr. B and Mrs. B had a medical science background. Their writing might be more straight forward, which means that writing emphasizes the presentation of the ideas. But Mr. A (senior) had the background of textile preservation. He took some courses like history of textiles which was more close to the humanities. Therefore, he probably put more emphasis on writing the story aesthetically. There might be some other reasons. Nevertheless, none of the measurements are perfect and it is not possible to answer these questions completely. But these results do provide us with a reference point from which to interpret the findings.

One result is definite, that is, Mrs. A had a very limited improvement in her English. When she came to Canada, she had no English and after a few years of being in Canada, she only learned a few words and very simple sentences. She did not have the ability to take the listening and writing tests and her self-assessment of English was at the very first level.

Using performance in Canada as another kind of measure allows us to determine the participants' functioning ability in Canada. It is clear that Mr. B and Mrs. B were doing quite well. From the findings, we can see that Mr. B completed his masters degree and found a permanent job in his profession. Mrs. B completed the nursing-aid program and received the nursing-aid certificate, which also indicates that her English has reached a functional level. But Mr. A (senior) had a failing experience in Canada. He did not obtain his masters degree and even quit his diploma program. Although he tried very hard, he could not find a job related to his profession. Mrs. A had the worst nightmare in Canada. She failed many job opportunities because of her English and she only felt secure by working in the Chinese family. Although she began to learn some English recently, she is still struggling. When considering this in comparison to the previous measurements, it is close to the self-assessment measurement. Miss B completed her elementary school education and got into the junior high school. It seems that she is doing very well in the school. Mr. A (junior) finished his high school and entered Toronto University with a scholarship, which also shows that he was doing quite well.

There are two issues from the listening comprehension tests, which might be worthwhile pointing out. One is that background knowledge plays an important role in listening comprehension. Actually, it is the same in reading. Although this is not a new idea and has been acknowledged by many researchers and theorists, this study is further evidence of its importance. If learners do not have the background for what they listen to or read, they cannot comprehend, although they might know very simple words in the material. Mohan (1985) gives a vivid description;

> Without some background knowledge, none of us can adequately interpret or understand individual occurrences. Without background knowledge of the relationship between temperature and water, we cannot understand why a puddle freezes in winter; we cannot interpret an individual increase or decrease in the interest rate without knowledge about the demand for credit; nor can we fully appreciate Shakespeare's "Hamlet" without background knowledge of dramatic conventions. (p.95)

The second is that children are more holistic during the language process. From the findings, we can see that Mr. A (junior) and Miss B used quite different strategies from adults. During the listening process, they tried to grasp the main ideas, reorganize the meaning by their own words and make sense from it. Although there were some parts they did not understand, they tried to piece information together to make it meaningful.

5.1.2 What are the respondents' attitudes toward Canadian people and why?

The findings indicate that both families have had some changes in terms of beliefs, value systems and attitudes toward Canadian society and people generally although the degree of change is different between these two families. Family B showed more rapid change but this was slower in Family A.

Basically, the changes can be divided into several categories. First are their beliefs or images about Canada. During the years of being in Canada, they gradually realized that their previous ideas were wrong. Canada is not like what the Communist regime taught them, such as, a capitalist country is a "hell" where people are selfish. Canada is not like what some people said, such as, western countries were very rich and full of money, and "people could even pick up the money from the street". Based upon their personal life experience in Canada, they have found that Canada is rich but people have to work hard to make the money, and most Canadian people are not selfish but friendly, helpful, kind and nice.

The second is the change of money value system and beliefs. Because of the cultural differences, people's attitudes and beliefs toward money are different. In the Chinese culture, people think that borrowing money is "bad", and living a simple life and saving money are "good". The perception about this "good" and "bad" is probably different in the Canadian culture. After staying in Canada for a few years, this perception has changed for these two families, but the findings show that Family B has changed greatly and Family A has changed only slightly.

It should be noted that this change took place gradually, depending on each individual's background and personal experiences. It did not happen overnight.

The other change which affected them was their status in Canada; from visitors and students to landed immigrants. This was a great change in their life. However, the attitude toward this change was different for these two families. Family B was so excited about it and Family A was not that happy. Although Family A still hoped that they would stay in Canada, the major reason was for their son's future.

Why is there a different attitude toward this change between these two families? Does it mean that Mr. A (senior) and Mrs. A like China more than Canada? The answer might relate to why Family A changed more slowly to the Canadian way of living.

From the findings, it is easy to see that Family A was not as successful as Family B regarding their performance in Canada. Family A had many failures in their Canadian experience and to some degree they lost confidence in themselves to compete in this society. They did not know what future was waiting for them. They were wondering and scared about what would happen to them. That is one of the reasons they laid their hope on their son because he was young and full of energy to compete and succeed. On the other hand, Family B had a different experience in Canada. They had a lot of success in their career. They felt secure in Canada, they knew what their future would be and they were full of hope in their new life. That might be the major reason to answer the above questions.

Then people would ask what caused the differences to occur. From the findings, it is not difficult to get the answer, that is, language is probably the major cause. Furthermore, language can also be the result of these different experiences. Because of English, Mr. A (senior) could not complete his masters degree, because of English, Mrs. A could not find a job she liked and had to work for a Chinese family as a nanny with very low pay, etc. Of course, there might be some other factors which caused their failure, but English was definitely the most prominent barrier in their lives. On the other hand, English played an important role in the successful experiences of Family B in Canada.

Changes of beliefs and value systems for these two families might be called "Acculturation" (Schumann, 1978, 1986) which is defined as the social and psychological integration of learners within the target language (English in this case) group.

In Schumann's Acculturation Model, attitudes, beliefs and other variables are emphasized as the cause of second language acquisition. This model proposes that learners will acquire a second language only to the degree that they acculturate to the second language community (Schumann, 1986). There is no doubt that this statement is acceptable. However, this model ignores the important role of the effect of language itself on the development of acculturation.

From the findings in this study, it is clear that when these families came to Canada, the degree of their acculturation was not fixed. During the long period of time they were experiencing Canada, their acculturation was gradually developing and the target language played an important role in this development. The difference between these two families evidenced this. Therefore, when we acknowledge the effect of acculturation on second language acquisition, we also have to realize the important role of the second language to facilitate the development of acculturation.

5.1.3 What are the respondents' experiences to be a foreigner and how do these experiences affect their second language acquisition?

It is widely acknowledged that second language learning is no longer considered as a process of acquiring linguistic codes but it is a complicated process involving many other factors, such as social, cultural and psychological variables. Second language acquisition is just like the growth of one person. In order to grow with good health, physically and spiritually, a person not only needs good nutrition, but also needs a good and healthy living environment, such as good family, good friends, good education, good neighbourhood, good teachers, etc.

What are the really important factors which influence second language learning? The findings from this study have uncovered several variables which seem to play important roles in English learning for these two families.

1. Personal academic growth

From the findings, it is clear that personal academic growth is one of the important driving forces to learn a second language, such as completing the masters degree and obtaining certificates. This theme appeared repeatedly during the investigation of this study. In the findings, we can see that in order to be able to get into the masters degree program, Mr. A (senior) and Mr. B tried very hard to improve their English with the hope of passing the TOEFL test. Mrs. B also studied English very hard with the hope that her English would be good enough so that she would be able to get into the nursing-aid program. Both children in these two families also worked hard with the hope that they would obtain high achievement in order to enter a good university. Therefore, this personal growth goal gives learners self-consciousness to learn a second language. Although this factor cannot guarantee every learner's success, it is a powerful driving force for learning a second language.

2. Jobs

Another driving force for these two families to learn English was finding a job. This motive had become an extremely important factor for all the members in these two families and this has always been the focus from the beginning of their being in Canada to the present. From the findings, it is very obvious that this theme was mentioned again and again during the interview. It is the major concern for both families in their

Canadian experiences. It should be noted that the purpose of finding a job varied from time to time. For example, at the beginning, they thought they could find a job and save a little money which would be helpful when they went back to China because the pay in Canada was much higher than that in China. If one person worked in Canada for one hour with the minimum wage ($5 an hour for example), he/she would probably have to work one month in China to earn as much. But after obtaining landed immigrant status, the purpose of finding a job changed slightly. As described by Family B, they tried hard to seek for better jobs with better pay. They did not intend to save more money. What they hoped for was to make a life better. For Family A, such change was slower, but there were some changes also. Therefore, in order to find a good job with better pay, they realized that English played an important role and they had to improve their language proficiency.

Getting a job which provides more money and social status also seems related to personal growth. Mr. A (senior) and Mr. B tried hard to enter into the masters degree program. Mrs. B studied hard to obtain the certificate. Mr. B worked hard to get the masters degree in order to receive a permanent work position in the lab. Through their efforts to succeed there was tremendous personal growth and self-confidence. Though it was less obvious in the case of Mr. A (senior) it was still apparent. Personal growth was an unexpected outcome to each person and in retrospect they also can see the effect.

3. Status

The findings of this study also show that another powerful driving force to learn English was their status change in Canada from students or visitors to landed immigrants. Even the least motivated person, Mrs. A, felt that she should go to school to learn some English at this time. She quit her job and took a few courses in English. This was a very big decision for her because she usually considered that making money was extremely important. Now she was willing to give up the opportunity of making money in order to learn English. She explained that if she did not learn English, she would probably be miserable spending the rest of her life in Canada. The findings also show that this status change made Mrs. B determined to improve her English in order to achieve a professional certificate for her future career.

It was observed that the status change was a great turning point for these two families. They realized that they could stay in Canada for a long time or even their life-time. However, this status change does not mean that they were totally acculturated into the Canadian culture and community, in other words, they had not necessarily reached the "assimilation" level (Schumann, 1978, 1986) which means that learners give up their own culture and identify and acculturate themselves into the target language community. Schumann (1980) proposed an assumption which says:

> The more social and psychological distance there is between the second language learner and the target language group, the lower the learner's degree of acculturation will be toward that group (p. 43-50).

Schumann (1978a) also proposed:

> ... second language acquisition is just one aspect of acculturation and the degree to which a learner acculturates to the target language group will control the degree to which he acquires the second language (p.34).

From the findings, it can be seen that Family B was close to what Schumann called "Acculturation", but they still had some distance to go. For example, they still strongly wanted a Chinese identity. Two evidences were presented in the findings, one is that Mr. B and Mrs. B wanted their daughter to keep the Chinese language in order to maintain the Chinese identity. The second evidence is that during the Olympic Games, Family B cheered for the Chinese team first and then the Canadian team, which indicates that in their mind, they are still Chinese.

For Family A, they seem to be even farther from "acculturation". Mr. A (senior) and Mrs. A mentioned in the interview that although they would like to stay in Canada as landed immigrants, they thought they would eventually go back to China because Canada was not the place for them.

The two children might be different from their parents. They are probably closer than their parents to "acculturation" which Gardner (1979, 1985) might call "integrative motivation". The researcher once heard from a child who has been in Canada for about four years that," I like Canada and I do not want to move back to China. Visiting China is OK, but not staying there". In the interview, Miss B mention many times that she liked Canada. Although Mr. A (junior) did not express strongly as Miss B about his thoughts of Canada, it is obvious that Mr. A (junior) holds different attitudes towards Canada from his parents. Therefore, it seems that children might adjust to a new world more easily.

Therefore, if "acculturation" can be described as an indicator of second language acquisition, the status change may be called the motor which pushes the indicator. The more powerful the motor, the faster the indicator turns. Here, motive may play an important role in second language acquisition.

Accommodation Theory (Giles & Byrne, 1982) claims that motivation to learn a second language is the key to becoming acculturated and it is closely related to learners and the target language group. This model places importance on how the individual learner perceives social distance rather than on actual social distance (Richard-Amato, 1988, p.61). This statement implies that status itself is not important, but how learners perceive this change becomes more important in learning a second language.

4. Workplace Language Environment

The other driving force which also seems to be important is workplace language environment which is the job orientated factor. As mentioned above, seeking a job is a powerful motive for these two families to learn English, but maintaining a job they like is another powerful driving force for learners to learn English. How much English was required at the work site? How many people spoke English at the work site? What important role did English play at the work site? All these seem important factors which affect second language acquisition. Many theorists define language environment as having two forms; one is natural or informal and the other is formal such as in classrooms. Workplace language environment serves as one aspect of natural language environment.

How much influence does language in the workplace environment have on second language learning? So far many studies have tried to address this issue. This study suggests that this might be an important factor which motivates learners to learn a second language and affects second language acquisition. Take the two wives from these two families as an example, Mrs. B always worked in places where English was required and Mrs. A worked in a place where no English was required. The result after staying in Canada for a few years has shown that they had a completely different achievement of English proficiency. Although at first it was difficult for Mrs. B, with little English, to work in a place where English was highly demanded, it really motivated her to learn English. If she wanted to survive in her job as a homecare person, she had to learn some English, otherwise she probably would have to find another job. The demands of the workplace for English are a driving force to motivate learners to pick up the language if they want to survive.

The researcher personally knows another lady who has been in Canada for about five years. When she came to Canada, she did not know any English. During the first two years, she attended several English classes, she learned some English, but her achievement was not very obvious. Afterwards, she found a job with a big company. She thought this was a much better job in comparison to all the jobs she had tried during the past two years. She received better pay and had clean working conditions. But most people in that company spoke English except for a few who spoke the same language as this lady, English was also highly demanded in the work, which required some reading and written communication. The company sometimes offered training programs, such as the safety program, first-aid program, and some professional training programs. All these training programs were in English and afterwards training tests were given. This became a major challenge for this lady. She felt tremendous pressure on her shoulders. She tried extremely hard to be successful in her job so that she could keep it. This was the first time she was motivated to improve her English. She brought the booklets, describing her job and duties, home and asked her husband to read together with her and explain them to her. She came home with many new words she had heard and seen in the workplace, and asked her husband what these words meant. She sometimes brought home newsletters from the company and tried to read them with a dictionary. She tried to find opportunities to practice English at the workplace as well as at home. Finally, she borrowed tapes, made by the company to show how good work could be done, and watched them again and again at home which helped to improve her English.

There are many examples that show how this lady was motivated to learn English. Until now she had worked here for about three years. Although she has never attended any ESL classes, her English has improved a lot. She felt free to communicate with her colleagues in her work and sometimes even made jokes with each other. She has had no problems in reading and writing as the work required, and she is confident that she can do an excellent job for the company. This motivation not only helped to improve her English at work, but has also helped her to acquire English in general. It appears that she feels more and more comfortable in communicating with people in English.

The above example is a further indication that the workplace language environment is another powerful driving force for learning a second language. This seems to apply more to adults than children, but if the school is also considered as children's work place, the effect should be the same. This suggests that more studies are needed on this issue.

5. Ethnic identity

Giles and Byrne (1982) proposed a second language acquisition theory called "Intergroup Theory" which is based upon the intent to refine "Speech-Accommodation Theory" (Giles & Byrne, 1982). In this model, ethnic identity is considered the most important factor in SLA. As seen in Chapter Two, this theory divided the learners into two categories, A and B. In Category A, the learners held highly to their own ethnic identity, and therefore they were afraid of assimilation. In this situation, target language development was minimal. The learners would not seek an informal acquisition context and they were only able to learn a small amount of vocabulary and grammar in the classroom setting. The learners in Category B were just the opposite. They were integratively motivated and their language acquisition was maximized. The learners would use every opportunity to acquire the language both in the informal and the formal context.

So far, few studies have been done to test this theory. It seems that the theory of Giles and Byrne is not much different from Schumann's acculturation model.

What can be drawn from this study to evaluate this model? In the Intergroup Theory, ethnic identity is treated as a very important factor in learning a new language. Intergroup Theory (Giles & Byrne, 1982) argued that if learners see their own ethnic identity as more important, their second language acquisition will be minimal. Is this the case? In the present study, at least, this statement is not evident. As shown, Family B was very successful in SLA. They were highly motivated and they fit into this Canadian society very well. They had many Canadian friends.

Does this necessarily indicate that they gave up their own identity? From the interview, they mentioned that when the Olympic Games were on, they cheered a lot for the Chinese team and the Canadian team was the second to cheer for. When Mr. and Mrs. B saw the danger that their daughter was going to lose Chinese language which is the important symbol of their ethnic identity, they worried very much and tried many ways to let their daughter keep the Chinese language. All this indicates they still remembered they were Chinese. So it might not be adequate to claim the contradictory relationship between ethnic identity and SLA. To understand more about this issue, additional studies are needed which focus directly on this aspect..

6. Other Experiences

Besides the factors, described above, which seem to affect second language acquisition, there are some others which are implied in the findings.

First is the cultural difference between learners and target language speakers. Because of the cultural difference, the way of thinking and approaching things are different between these two groups. In the Chinese culture, being modest is considered as good moral behaviour. There is a famous saying in China, "It makes progress to be modest and it leads to a failure to be arrogant". Due to this belief, Chinese people do not usually express themselves too much and even if they have some good ideas, they listen to others first. This tradition is probably quite different from the Canadian culture.

In the findings, when Mr. A (senior) was having classes, he found that the Canadian students were very active in the classroom. They raised questions and spoke their ideas freely. However, Mr. A (senior) felt himself to be very quiet in the classroom and though sometimes he thought he had good ideas, he was scared and did not have the courage to speak out. Is this a problem only for Mr. A (senior)? In reality it is very common. Many other Chinese students expressed this same experience. This might result from the Chinese traditional culture. According to second language learning theories, this cultural behaviour becomes a barrier for second language acquisition because this stops learners from taking risks to practise their English, which is considered an important characteristic of a good language learner. The importance of risk-taking is not only in the classroom but also in the natural settings. Beebe (1983) elaborated:

> In the classroom, these ramifications might include a bad grade in the course, a fail on the exam, a reproach from the teacher, a smirk from a classmate, punishment or embarrassment imposed by oneself. Outside the classroom, individuals learning a second language face other negative consequences if they make mistakes. They fear looking ridiculous; they fear the frustration coming from a listener's blank look, showing that they have failed to communicate; they fear the danger of not being able to take care of themselves; they fear the alienation of not being able to communicate and thereby get close to other human beings. Perhaps worst of all, they fear a loss of identity (p.40).

The second factor which is implied in the findings relates to characteristics of learners' personality, extroversion and introversion. Based on the explanations by Brown (1987), extroversion is the extent to which a person has a deep-seated need to receive ego enhancement, self-esteem, and a sense of wholeness from other people as opposed to receiving that affirmation within oneself. On the other hand, introversion is the extent to which a person derives a sense of wholeness and fulfillment apart from a reflection of the self from other people. As a result, a person who has an extroverted personality might be outgoing, gregarious and talkative, but a person with an introverted personality can be quiet, shy and reserved. It is believed that extroversion and introversion are also potentially important factors in the acquisition of a second language.

However, it is still not clear whether extroversion or introversion helps or hinders the process of second language acquisition (Richard-Amato, 1988). Previous studies are unclear as to the results. Nevertheless, this suggests that extroversion might have a positive correlation with second language acquisition. The findings have shown that Family B might be categorized as people with an extroverted personality and the members in Family A have introverted personalities based on their social life experiences. It is possible that because of their different personality, they have quite a different social life which has determined the amount of contact with target language speakers and the way of approaching target language speakers, which affected their second language learning.

7. Summary of Findings Related to Major Factors

In summary, the factors described above are the major factors from the findings of English learning experiences of these two families. They are individually discussed but they are somehow related. They are clustered into a powerful driving force which affect second language learning for these two families. However, this study suggests that ethnic identity might not be a very important factor in second language learning in comparison with other factors described.

5.1.4 What is the relationship between motivation and second language acquisition?

The relationship between motivation and second language acquisition has been a popular issue in second language research during the last two decades. Many studies have been done to investigate this issue as indicated in the literature review. However, the results from these studies are controversial. The major debate is around Gardner's Social-Educational Model of Second Language Learning which indicates that integrative motivation has a positive correlation with second language learning and is a determining factor. One of the criticisms of the previous studies is that most of the researchers used quantitative research methods which have difficulty in examining the complicated process of human behaviour, such as, learning a second language. This study used a case study approach to investigate this sophisticated phenomenon.

What has been found to explain this issue? Does this study support Gardner's model or oppose it? The answer is not that simple. Since this issue deals with human behaviour, it is impossible for this study to answer these questions thoroughly. However, this study may help us to understand this issue better and lead to further studies. The following are some conclusions that can be drawn from this study.

1. The importance of motivation in SLA

From the results of the measurement of English proficiency, it is easy to see that English growth for these two families was very different except for the children. Generally speaking, when these two families came to Canada, the English proficiency for each individual in these two families was slightly different. However, after a few years in Canada, there were many differences in proficiency. One of the interesting findings in Family A is that there were two extremes, i.e., Mrs. A's English improvement was minimal, but on the other hand, Mr. A (junior) showed great improvement in his English. In Family B, both Miss B and Mrs. B had tremendous improvement in their English.

This finding further emphasizes the point made earlier that the time period of staying in the target language environment is not the determining factor for acquiring the target language. Mrs. A stayed in Canada for about four years, very close to the time period for which Mrs. B stayed in Canada. But the language acquisition for these two wives was totally different. Therefore, one conclusion is that factors other than time, are involved in learning a second language. One obvious factor, which seems most important, is motivation to study English. From the findings, it can be seen that Mrs. A has been in Canada for many years, however she did not try to learn English because she thought English was not important in her life. Mrs. B was completely opposite. She thought English was very useful and valuable to her. At the first stage of her being in Canada, she considered that being in an English speaking country was a very good opportunity for her to learn English because when she went back to China, it would be helpful in her work. After she became a landed immigrant, her desire to learn English was even stronger. These thoughts were very powerful forces which motivated her to learn English. From this, it can been seen that motivation is one of the most important factors in SLA.

Krashen (1981) in his theory proposed the Input Hypothesis which indicated that if learners get a large quantity of input of a second langauge and this input is i + 1 (the difficulty level of the language is slightly higher than that of the learner), the learners then will acquire more of the second language. But this is only part of the process. There is a condition which controls the input. This controller, in Krashen's words, is called a "filter". How much language input learners can acquire depends on the filter. But what is this "filter"? Krashen (1981) explains that a filter is one part of the second language learning processor which is determined by learners' motivation, attitudes and emotional state.

It should be noted that in Krashen's Monitor Model, "filter" was considered as a screening device which acts subconsciously. This statement was criticized by other researchers who believe that several agents influence motivation. Learners have to actively make different choices based on their beliefs, value systems, cultural background, personality, etc. There was no indication in this study to show that the influence of motivation on second language learning is a subconscious process. It might be the opposite, that it is a very active process.

Gardner (1985) claimed that motivation was the determining factor in SLA. From this study, it is difficult to make such generalization, but one point is clear, that motivation is an extremely important factor in SLA.

2. The relationship between motivation and SLA

In Gardner' Social-Educational Model, motivation is defined as being of two kinds, integrative motivation and instrumental motivation. Gardner (1981) proposed the distinction between these two different kinds of motivation. Integrative motivation refers to positive attitudes toward the target language group and the potential for integrating into that group in order to become members of that group, and instrumental motivation stands for more functional reasons to learn a second language. Gardner

(1981, 1983, 1985) argued that integrative motivation is superior to instrumental motivation for acquiring a second language.

To answer the question as to whether this study supports Gardner's statement or not, we, first, have to understand the concepts of integrative motivation and instrumental motivation. Although Gardner (1979, 1981) gave a theoretical framework for these terms, how to define these two types of motivation is still a question. For example, what motivation is involved in finding a job? It is usually considered as instrumental motivation (Gardner, 1979, 1981). If considering the meaning of finding a job itself, this seems reasonable. However, when examining the meaning behind it, it is very difficult to classify the type of motivation. As mentioned in the discussion, finding a job was an extremely important motive for both families to learn a second language, but the meaning of finding a job varied from time to time and from individual to individual. It is clear that the purpose of finding a job for both families is not the same. For Family A, they probably thought that if they could find a job, they could acquire more money and save more so that they would have enough to spend during the rest of their life when they went back to China. For Family B, it might be different. At the beginning of the year in Canada, they perhaps had the same ideas as Family A, but after they received landed immigrant status, they thought a good job might provide enough money to have a better life and they would feel more secure in Canada. Therefore, if we do not know the real intent of finding a job, how can it be accurate to judge whether it as integrative motivation or instrumental motivation.

Second, we also have to consider that motivation is not a stable but a variable factor. It changes as the learners' economic and social situation changes. One good example is the change these two families have made before and after the change of their status in Canada. On the other hand, the relationship between integrative motivation and instrumental motivation is not like water and fire which cannot exist at the same time. For a learner, he might have integrative motivation to learn a second language, but meanwhile he might also have some instrumental motivation. For example, Mr. B and Mrs. B had very positive attitudes toward Canadians and their way of thinking. Their beliefs were getting closer and closer to Canadians, but they still strongly held their identity as Chinese. This mixed emotional feeling exists at the same time. Human emotion and feeling is not like numbers in mathematics. One plus one equals two, but human behaviour is not that simple to describe.

The third issue which has to be considered is that second language learning is a continual process, which means that the development of a second language occurs over a long period of time, not overnight. Therefore, if we examine the effect of motivation on second language learning, we also have to treat motivation as a continual process, meaning that we examine motivation over a period of time to see how it is developing, not just the motivation at a certain time. In this way, we might get more understanding of this relationship. In the previous studies, most researchers ignored the fact of this continual development of motivation and second language learning. They just took motivation at a specific time then compared it with second language achievement. This might be one of the problems why the results are controversial.

The three issues described above, and there might be more, indicate that there is not one simple answer to the questions raised earlier. This study provides the researcher opportunities to have a close look at this relationship and have a better understanding but it is impossible to completely answer all questions.

The findings from this study also imply that there are several variables which have played an important role in second language learning of these two families. They are status in Canada, jobs, personal development in professions, self-confidence, personality and culture, saving the "face". All these variables are, in some way, related to motivation. But it is very difficult to identify which is integrative motivation and which is instrumental motivation because the researcher believes that the concepts of integrated motivation and instrumental motivation lack validity. Therefore, the researcher did not have any intent to prove or disprove Gardner's Social-Educational Model.

However, some questions or issues to be considered regarding the relationship between motivation and second language acquisition were raised. In order to have a more accurate answer, more studies are probably needed, which would examine specific areas using qualitative research methods.

3. The circular process of motivation and second language achievement

Whether it is motivation to learn a second language or whether it is the feeling of success in learning the language is the reason for learners to gain proficiency in second language acquisition is a big argument. Someone described it as a "Chicken and egg question". Gardner and his colleagues (1979, 1980, 1983) claimed that integrative motivation was the determining cause for learners to be successful in SLA. However, some other researchers (Maehr & Archer, 1987; Hermann, 1980; etc) suggested that second language achievement had a great effect upon the learner's motivation, and therefore, the success of second language learning also played an important role in SLA.

From this study, we might argue that the above statements are all correct depending on how people look at them. In the case of Mrs. A, because she did not have any motivation or reason to learn English at the beginning of her being in Canada, she learned very little English. So for the people who want to learn something, they must have some reason in their mind for why they want to do it. In this situation, we might say that motivation plays the role of initiating learners into learning a second language. However, there are two points to be noted. First, this motivation is not necessarily the integrative motivation described by Gardner (1979, 1980, etc.) and this motivation can be motivation in a general sense. Second, the above example does not mean that integrative motivation is a determining factor in learning a second language because the motivation for Mrs. A to learn English is not the integrated motivation as described by Gardner.

It might be argued that there is an interaction between motivation and second language achievement when the learners' English proficiency reaches a certain level. This process is not difficult to find among these two families although there is a difference in the speed of English development from individual to individual. Take Mrs. B for example, when she first arrived in Canada, she did not know much English. Whenever she had some problems, she would cry and wanted to go back to China. She would argue that China was much better than Canada. However, as time passed, she acquired more and more English and she felt more and more comfortable living in Canada. One of the major reasons for being more contented is that she could communicate with others. Because of the improvement of her English, she began to make friends, she felt more comfortable in her work, she could go out by herself to do things, and she could understand the TV programs. She felt more independent not needing to rely on her husband, she had more freedom, and life became much easier. Because of this, she was more motivated to learn English. Recently, she went back to China to have a visit with her relatives. When she came back, she said that one visit to China was enough and she does not have a strong desire to go back to visit again. This experience is shared by many other Chinese people. From this experience, we can see clearly that motivation and second language achievement is not a linear relationship. They interact with each other and help each other to develop.

In summary, although it is difficult for this study to conclude that the Social-Education Model is right or wrong, the findings from this study help us focus more clearly on the role of integrative motivation and achievement in the process of acquiring a second language. The argument of integrative motivation as the determining factor in second language acquisition is challenged in this discussion. More studies are probably needed.

5.1.5 What are the differences between adults and children of these two families regarding their English acquisition?

The issue of differences between children and adults in second language acquisition has been studied by many researchers for many years. It is widely accepted that it is faster, better and easier for children to learn a second language than for adults, especially in pronunciation. Many explanations have been proposed to give reasons why children are better learners than adults. However, many of these explanations are based on cognitive theory and on the theory of biology. Although some researchers have tried to explain this difference by using affective factors based on the theory of sociology and psychology, the arguments are very vague as indicated in the literature review. In this section, some issues from the findings in this study are presented with the focus of the influence of affective variables.

1. Difference in motivation

From the discussions above, we find that motivation has great influence on second language acquisition. Now we have to ask whether motivation has the same influence on both children and adults. The findings in this study indicated that the answer is yes, but there are differences between children and adults. The children in these two families seem to have different types of motivation to learn a second language in comparison to the adults.

When Gardner (1979, 1981, etc.) described his Social-Educational Model, he emphasized the influence of integrative motivation on second language acquisition, but he did not distinguish between children and adults for whom the effects might be different. Macnamara (1973) pointed out that attitudinal factors had relatively little influence on SLA by children, perhaps simply because attitudes were not fully developed in young learners. Macnamara said:

> A child suddenly transported from Toronto to Berlin will learn German no matter what he thinks of Germans (p.37).

It is possible that young children do not develop the integrative motivation which Gardner talked about, but this does not mean that children do not have motivation to learn a second language. The question is, what forces drive children to learn a second language? The findings indicate that the children in these two families were interested in learning English in order to make friends, survive in schools have fun, be happy, play with others, enjoy life, etc. It is easy to see that children are so innocent and naive and that they are interested in meeting their very basic social and physical needs. Although adults may also have social and physical needs to learn a second language, their motivation is shaped by many other needs and factors. That might be the major difference between children and adults. Because of this, children learn a second language in quite a different way and they feel that learning a second language is more fun and more enjoyable, and they learn in a very natural way.

2. Difference in social roles

If motivation has a great influence on second language acquisition, then social factors do have a significant effect on motivation, such as, the kind of jobs learners hold, economic status, position in the society, responsibilities for the family, etc. The findings in this study indicated that these social factors are quite different for adults and for children. From the observations of these two Chinese families, it is easy to see that children and adults were playing totally different roles in this new world. For example, adults have so many things to worry about; they need to find a job to earn money so that they can feed their family, they worry about their children whether they would be successful in schools, they worry whether they would be fired by their employer, they worry whether money they earn is enough to support the family, and too many other things to write down. However, children do not seem to have similar worries. It can be often heard from other parents that when shopping, their children ask to buy whatever they like and they do not care how much these things cost. As long as they like it, children try every means to persuade their parents to buy something for them. The different roles adults and children play in the society might have great impact on the motivation to learn a second language.

3. Differences in culture beliefs

Children play different social roles from adults when they move to a new world as described above. And also, children have a different degree of cultural beliefs from their parents. It is clear that when people move from one culture to a new culture, adults are greatly influenced by their own culture, but their children have less of the culture and they seem more flexible. So after they arrive in the new culture, children adopt the new culture such as food, clothing, beliefs and language much faster and easier than adults. This study also shows some these influences. One obvious example is the food. It is well known that Chinese food is quite different from Canadian food. Rice is the main food in China, but in Canada, cheese, pizza, hamburgers and meat are the main food. The data shows that not long after being in Canada, the two children came to love these Canadian foods and the McDonald's restaurant is the most favourite place to eat for these two children. But this is not the case for the parents. Although once in a while it is all right to have some Canadian food, their favourite food is still the Chinese food. There are many examples showing that children give up their original culture more easily and pick up the new culture but adults take a much longer time to adjust themselves and some of them might never be able to adopt the new culture.

4. Difference in willingness to take risks

Risk taking is considered as another major factor in second language acquisition. When Robin (1975) defined what a good second language learner was, he stated that a good language learner was:

> ... willing to appear foolish ... to make mistakes ... [and] to live with a certain amount of vagueness (p.47).

In this statement, it is implied that risk taking is an important characteristic of a good language learner. Beebe (1983) reviewed the social psychological literature and concluded that moderate risk takers would have the highest probability of success in terms of the accuracy of their guesses in learning a second language. In other words, on a continuum ranging from high to low, people at a moderate risk-taking level are probably more successful in second language acquisition.

In this study, it has been found that risk-taking is different between adults and children when they approach a second language. The findings indicated that children are willing to take risks and they seek for language information holistically. For example, when the children listened to the news on TV, both of them showed that they used quite different strategies to comprehend the messages. It seems that the children tried to get the main ideas and then to reorganize the meaning by using their own words. In this process, it can be seen that the children took many guesses and created some new things to make the message more understandable and reasonable. However, the adults seem to use another kind of listening strategy. They were more conservative. Their comprehension focused on the facts and more details of the content, and as a result, they missed something and sometimes they did not have a whole picture. It is clear that the strategies children and adults used in this case are not the same. One involves risk-taking while the other is more conservative.

It should be noted that this difference does not mean that all adults are not willing to take risks. The situation will be different from individual to individual among adults. Take this study for example, Mr. B and Mrs. B seem more likely to take more risks than Mr. A (senior). Mrs. A would not take any risks. In a general sense, at least in this study, the children are more willing to take risks than are the adults.

It is possible that this difference is one of the factors which causes the difference between adults and children in acquiring a second language.

4. Difference in language environment

Everyone can see that the language environment, whether natural or imposed in a formal setting, is different for adults and children when they learn a second language. Dulay, Bert and Krashen (1982) argued:

> ... Differences in the language environment of children and adults may also result in differences in the success attained by children and adults. Children receive much more concrete "here-and-now" input, which facilitates language acquisition; in contrast, adults typically are exposed to conversation about topics whose referents are not obvious from the nonlinguistic context (p. 95).

The difference in language environment is not only reflected in the kind of language input. The findings from this study also suggest that there are other differences. The first is that the language environment around children is quite different from that around adults. For example, Mr. A (junior) and Miss B went to school and they were totally surrounded by English. They had to speak English in order to communicate with their friends, classmates and teachers. However, Mrs. A worked in the home of a Chinese family, she did not have to speak English and did not have the opportunity to hear English, either. Mr. A (senior), Mr.

B and Mrs. B seem to have much better language environment than Mrs. A. All three of them were working or studying in the place where English is highly demanded. Second, children, as mentioned above, receive different kinds of language input in comparison with adults. For example, children receive a variety of language input because they have to study many subjects at school. However, the situation is different for adults. Besides the daily language, most of the time, the language used at their work is related to their profession. Therefore, the content of language input is limited. In addition, the amount of language input children obtain is also quite different from that which adults get. It is very clear that children get much more language input than adults. Children gain language input from many different sources, such as, TV, teachers, peers, friends, books, etc., but the situation for adults is different. They do not spend as much time as children in making use of these sources to acquire the language.

Someone would probably ask if adults had the same language environment as children, would they learn a second language faster and better? Some researchers proposed that adults would do better in this situation. This is an hypothesis based on cognitive theory. But this researcher could find no study to answer this question. It might never be done because it is impossible to establish such conditions. Adults will never be the same as children even if their physical environment is the same.

In summary, it is very obvious that there is a different language environment for children and adults. This difference is not only the quality of language input, but also the amount and kinds of language input. The language environment is an important factor for the difference in acquiring a second language between children and adults.

5.2 Conclusions

This study was designed to investigate the complicated process of second language acquisition of two Chinese families in their real life experiences by using a "Case study" research methodology. The study examined the most important social, cultural and psychological factors which have effected second language learning. Although social, cultural and psychological factors were considered the main factors, other variables were also taken into account because of the complexity of this study.

The literature review indicated the importance and necessity of this study because most previous studies used quantitative research methods and the research contexts were different among these studies. The results from these studies were controversial and some even had opposite findings. One of the major problems is that these studies ignored the complexity of human behaviour which is difficult to measure. This study tried to understand this complicated phenomenon in the learners' real life, and it makes more sense.

Since this study was based on only two Chinese families, the researcher did not intend, and it may even be impossible, to make any conclusive generalizations. The researcher noted that these two Chinese families had their own uniqueness and cannot represent all immigrants. The findings might also be different for immigrants from other countries, such as those from Europe, Africa and South America. People from different countries have their own culture, their own way of thinking, their own economic background, etc. Their reasons for learning English may be different from those of the two Chinese families in this study. These differences should be born in mind. Through this study, it was hoped that some insight might be achieved into how social, cultural and psychological variables and, in particular, motivational factors affect second language acquisition.

From the findings, several arguments or suggestions might be concluded.

1. The self-appraisal technique which was used to measure second language proficiency agrees with the performance of these two families in their profession and social life in Canada, which indicates that Family B, except for children, had higher English proficiency than Family A. However, the results from the listening and writing tests were slightly different. The result for Mr. A (senior) was better than his self-assessment. There might be a few reasons to cause this difference. One possible explanation is that Mr. A (senior) under-assessed his English ability. It is also possible that Mr. A (senior) was better at

taking tests rather than using the language to communicate in real situations. Nevertheless, every measurement has its own strength and weakness. The most important thing is how we interpret results from these measurements.

2. The results from the measurements of English proficiency indicated that children from both families acquired English differently from their parents. When these two children came to Canada, their English was very low. Especially for Miss B, whose English was zero. But after a few years in Canada, the measurements showed that their English proficiency was close to or better than their parents. This agrees with the beliefs that children acquire the second language more readily than adults.

3. During the years of being in Canada, these two families have changed in terms of their images about Canada and its people, their value system and their status in Canada, but the degree and speed of these changes differed considerably between these two families. The change in Family B seemed faster than that in Family A. The findings have shown that the status change for these two families had a great impact on them to learn English, but the opportunity for them to stay in Canada forever did not mean that they were totally acculturated as Schumann described or that their motivation to learn English changed into integrative motivation as Gardner explained. As shown in the discussion, this different degree and speed of change might be due to their different experiences of failure and success. In

addition, one of the major causes of their failure or success might be the language "English". This finding showed that not only the beliefs, value systems and status influence second language learning but the second language also affects beliefs, value systems and attitudes, which is not emphasized by Schumann's acculturation model.

4. The findings of this study suggest that personal growth, finding jobs, status change, and workplace language environment are the most important variables which motivated these two families to acquire English, except for the children. Cultural difference and personality, such as extroversion and introversion, also seem to have played an important role in learning a second language. Although these factors are categorized independently, they are somehow related to each other. Ethnic-identity does not seem to be a very important factor influencing second language acquisition in this study. However, the effect of these factors might be different for other immigrants.

5. In terms of the relationship between motivation and second language acquisition, the results of this study suggest some arguments. First of all, this study supports the perception that motivation plays an important role in learning a second language, but might not be the determining factor as Schumann claimed. Secondly, this study indicated that it might not be accurate to classify integrative or instrumental motivation by

using a list of questions because if researchers do not understand fully why learners want to learn a second language, it is impossible to make decisions about their motivation. Finding a job is a good example. Furthermore, this study suggests that the interaction of second language acquisition and motivation is a dynamic process which needs time. It might not be appropriate to examine this relationship by just using language achievement tests and questionnaires on motivation because the information reflects this relationship only at one point on the continuum of this development. Thirdly, this study implied that motivation to learn a second language for these two families is changeable depending on their particular situation, especially at the early years of their being in Canada. Because of this variation, sometimes one learner could have both integrative and instrumental motivation at the same time. Fourthly, this study supports the statement that the relationship between second language achievement and motivation is a circular relationship, which means that motivation influences second language acquisition and is also affected by second language achievement. The results of this study indicate that motivation might have the initial function of starting this cycle.

5. This study provided further evidence that children learn a second language quite differently from adults in many ways. The findings indicate that the children in these two families acquired English faster and better than their parents. This might

be due both to the quantity and quality of the interaction with English speakers. Quality of language input for children refer to the concrete or now-and-here language input, but the input for adults is more conversational. In addition, the quantity of language input for children is greater than adults and children also have greater variety of language input than adults. More importantly, children have different driving forces to learn a second language in comparison with adults. Children's motivation is mostly based on social and physical needs but motivation for adults to learn a second language is more complicated. In addition to the human basic needs, adults have many more things to consider and worry about than children do.

In summary, this section concludes some suggestions and questions raised from this study. These findings might help us have a better understanding of the complicated process of acquiring a second language, and of how motivation and other affective factors influence this process. However, it should be noted that the findings in this study could be different if other second language learners are examined.

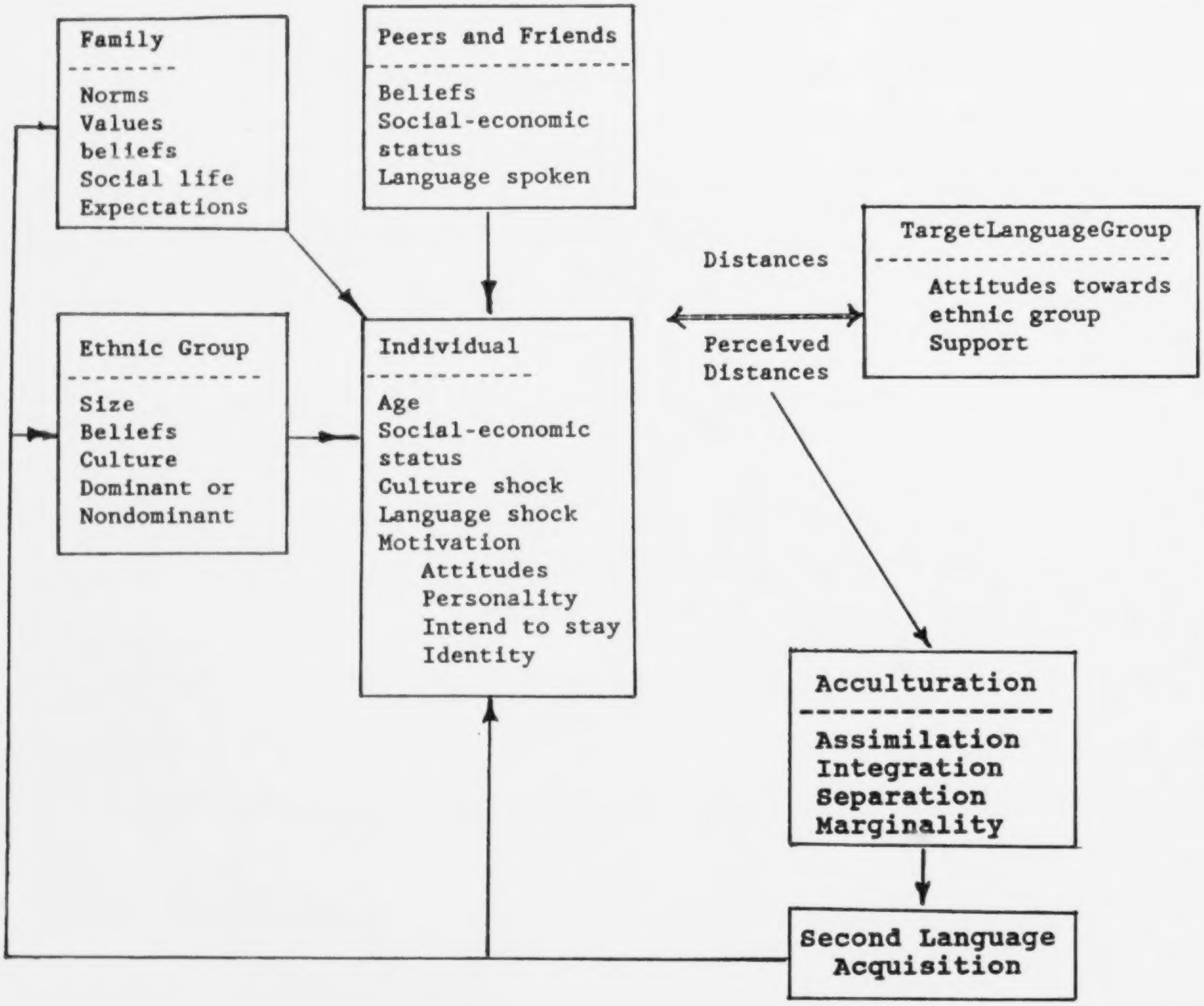
5.3 Proposed Model

In this section, a proposed model of second language acquisition is suggested based on the findings of this study and Schumann's acculturation model and Giles' inter-group model. It should be noted that this proposed model will need more studies for verification.

The following figure illustrates the details of this model. From the figure, it can be seen that this model consists of a series of variables: second language acquisition, acculturation, second language individuals, target language group, peers and friends, family as well as ethnic group.

FIGURE TWO

The Proposed Model of Second Language Acquisition



What is the relation of all these variables? As the figure indicates, second language acquisition is related to the amount of acculturation and is dependent upon the degree to which second language learners align themselves with the target language culture. This acculturation includes four different types, assimilation, integration, separation and marginality (details are explained in chapter 2). It is proposed that assimilation and integration will enhance the contact between second language learners and the target language group so that second language acquisition will be facilitated. Separation and marginality will reduce the contact between second language learners and the target language group so that second language acquisition will be minimized.

The acculturation level is decided by the distance and perceived distance between second language learners and target language group. Here, the distance refers to actual social, cultural and psychological distance and perceived distance is defined as the perception of social, cultural and psychological distance, which can also be described as how second language learners define themselves in relationship to the target language group. It should be noted that these two types of distances depend upon second language learners, target language group and the influences they have upon each other.

Why are the individual learners' variables emphasized in this model? Because from the findings of this study, it implies that the individual variables might be more important than the influences of ethnic group in the process of second language acquisition. The individual variables include age, social-economic status in the learners' own country as well as in the new world, culture shock, language shock, motivation, attitude, personality and the intend to stay in the new world. The variables on the target language group side are the attitude toward ethnic group or second language learners and the support provided to the ethnic group. For example, this study indicates that higher social economic status, younger age and longer planning to stay in the new world shortened the distances to reach the acculturation levels of integration or assimilation so that the second language acquisition was enhanced.

Individual variables will also be influenced by peers, friends, family and the ethnic group. Do they speak the target language? What social-economic status do they have? What are their beliefs and practices? All these will shape second language learners' perception of the target language group. The influence of family might be even greater. This depends on the family social and cultural beliefs and values, family social life and expectation in the new world. The size of the ethnic group where the individual learners live, their modified cultural view and beliefs, and their social, political and economic positions can have a major effect upon an individual acquiring a second language.

Most importantly, individual learners will be affected by the second language acquisition which in turn will also influence the variables of family and the ethnic group. Therefore, the proposed model suggests a cyclic relationship. For example, if the second language learners acquire more of the target language, it is possible that they will reach higher socio-economic status, they will be more motivated, they will reduce the level of culture and language shock, they will be more confident and they will be willing to stay longer in the new world. As a result, the distance between second language learners and the target language group will be reduced and second language acquisition will be enhanced.

5.4 Implications

In this section, some implications will be discussed based on the findings from this study. The presentation is divided into three parts, e.g., implications for learning a second language; implications for second language teaching and implications for further research.

5.4.1 Implications for learning a second language

This study found that learning a second language is not just promoted by the need to acquire linguistic codes, such as vocabulary, phonetics and semantics, etc. Motivation and some other affective factors are also important when learning a second language. Therefore, learners should be aware that self-motivation and keeping a positive attitude towards learning a second language are also important to success.

The findings also showed the importance of self-confidence. A good learner should not only have the confidence in contacting target language speakers, but also confidence in his/her ability to acquire a second language successfully.

To be a good learner, he/she should be willing to take risks by using the target language, such as, making a guess and thinking creatively. This risk-taking will enhance the participation of learners in the process of second language acquisition, therefore it facilitates second language learning. Anxiety and fear of making mistakes will become a barrier. Although sometimes learners make mistakes and make inappropriate guesses, they can learn from these. Of course, there is a limitation to the degree of taking risks. Too much or unreasonable risk-taking might not enhance second language learning.

5.4.2 Implications for second language teaching

This study indicates the importance of motivation in SLA and further shows that ESL teaching should give more emphasis to this issue. Whatever the teaching materials or teaching methods, the ESL curriculum should incorporate activities that motivate students. ESL teaching is not only to pass the knowledge of the target language to learners, but also to help learners acquire the language more efficiently by relating teaching to the existing motivation of students.

How can teachers motivate students? There might be many possibilities. For example, this study found that finding a job was an extremely important factor in motivating learners to learn English. It might possibly be the same for other immigrants and second language learners who are newcomers. Therefore, teachers should consider how to relate this factor to their teaching. One possibility is that the ESL program could put the learners' desire into the program by choosing the teaching context which learners would be able to use in their future and by considering how to help learners find a job that is most appropriate for them.

Teachers can also motivate students by helping them build greater self-confidence, choosing the appropriate difficulty level of materials, giving more encouragement, trying to give students more opportunities for success, respecting students' abilities and displaying their progress.

This study also shows that the workplace language environment is an important variable in SLA. The findings suggest that for adults learning a second language the workplace is most effective. The high demand of using second language at work is a powerful driving force for learners to acquire the language. So ESL programs in the workplace should be encouraged. Although there are some programs like this in existence, it is not enough. Some programs are not well designed. Most of the ESL programs are offered in the education institutions but the curriculum has little to do with learners' work experience. This situation might need some changes. If the language could be used in learner's daily life and daily work, SLA would be enhanced.

This study indicates that there are some differences between children and adults to acquire a second language. This implies that the teaching methods should also be different for children and adults. Some institutions use similar curriculums for both children and adults. This is not appropriate, especially in some countries where English is a foreign language, such as in China, Japan and other eastern countries. Therefore, a more appropriate program should be considered to fit the situation for children.

This study also raised the question of how to measure second language proficiency. There are many arguments about this issue. It is acknowledged that every existing measurement might have some problems, but one tendency is clear that more and more people believe that the measurement should focus on the ability to use the language in real life, not just knowledge about the language.

5.4.3 Implications for further research

This study suggests the importance of using qualitative research to investigate the second language learning process in which human behaviour and emotion are important parts. The literature review has shown the lack of qualitative research in this area. This study provided some arguments for using more qualitative research. First, it was found in this study that motivation is a dynamic variable and the development of motivation to learn a second language is also a process. Therefore, to understand how this variable affects second language acquisition, qualitative research methods may be more appropriate in investigating the whole process of this development. Second, this study implies that human behaviour and emotion cannot be separated from the real life context. If we try to understand human behaviour without the context, it is very difficult. To understand why people have this or that behaviour, we have to understand the context first. Therefore, qualitative research might be more appropriate.

This study points out the difficulties of defining integrative and instrumental motivation. Because motivation is a dynamic variable, it might change from time to time during the learning of a second language. In addition, there might be many other variables which influence a learners' motivation during certain times and certain situations. Therefore, it is extremely difficult to identify what type of motivation learners have. It might not be necessary to sort motivation into these two categories.

This study also raised some questions. More research is needed in order to have more insight into these questions. The following areas are recommended for further research.

1. This study focused on two Chinese families who have their own

uniqueness. More studies are needed with immigrants from other countries in order to make comparisons.

2. It is necessary to conduct a similar study in a different context, for example, in the context where English is a foreign language, such as, in China, Japan, Hong Kong, etc.

3. This study shows the difference between children and adults in acquiring a second language. It points out that the difference is not only in the area of cognition and neurology, but also in motivation. Although this study raised some points, e.g., children have different motivations from adults, it needs further investigation.

4. This study shows that ethnic-identity might not have a great influence on second language acquisition and this does not agree with the arguments put forth by some theorists. Therefore, more studies are needed in this area.

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APPENDIX ONE

SELF-APPRAISAL QUESTIONNAIRE OF ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

Questionnaire of Self Evaluation of English Proficiency

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1. **This question asks you to judge your own level of speaking ability in the language of English in which you are the most proficient (MLP). Please read one of the six paragraphs below and decide which paragraph describes your ability to read the MPL (and to understand the spoken MLP). Please be as honest and as accurate as possible. Circle the number preceding only one of the paragraphs below:**

   a. My speech in the MLP is limited to a few words and I have great difficulty understanding the MLP even when it is spoken very slowly. I cannot really communicate any information in English.

   b. I can ask and answer questions about very familiar subjects and can understand simple questions and statements if they are spoken very slowly and sometimes repeated. My vocabulary is limited to basic needs (food, asking directions, greeting people, and so forth). I make many grammatical mistakes but my teacher can usually understand me. I can order food in a restaurant, get a room in a hotel, ask directions on the street, and introduce myself to people.

   c. I can talk with native speakers of the MLP about myself and my family, my job or studies, hobbies and current events. I can understand most conversations in the MLP except when the speech is very fast. My grammar is fairly good but I make mistakes with very complicated constructions. If I do not know the word for a particular thought or object, I can usually describe it by using other easier words.

   d. I can understand almost everything spoken by the native MLP users. My vocabulary is good enough that I usually know most or all of the words for words for what I want to say. My grammar is good and any mistakes I make usually with the more complicated constructions. I can pronounce the MLP clearly but do not have a perfect accent.

   e. I can understand native MLP speakers even when they are speaking quickly and using sophisticated or colloquial expressions. My vocabulary is very extensive, even for technical matters, and I can talk fluently and accurately about almost any subject with which I am familiar. I make only a very few grammatical errors and my pronunciation is very good but not completely native.

f. My speech is exactly like that of an educated native speaker of the MLP.

2. **This question asks you to judge your own level of reading ability in your MLP. Please read each of the six paragraphs below and decide which paragraph best describes your ability to read the MLP. Circle the number preceding only one of the paragraphs below:**

   a. I cannot really read anything in English or can read only a few words that I have "memorized".

   b. I can recognize the letters of the alphabet or the very common characters or printed syllables of English. I can read some personal and place names, street signs, office and shop designations, and some isolated words and phrases.

   c. I can get the general sense of routine business letters, news items, and articles in fields with which I am familiar, but I need to use the dictionary extensively in doing so.

   d. I can grasp the essential meaning of newspaper items addressed to the general reader and routine correspondence reports, and technical material in fields with which I am familiar without using a dictionary. However, I need to refer to the dictionary fairly often in order to work out the precise meaning of the entire text. I sometimes have difficult with unusually complex structures of specialized expressions.

   e. With occasional use of a dictionary, I can read without difficultly any prose directed at the general reader and all material in fields with which I am familiar.

   f. I can read extremely difficult and abstract prose as well as highly colloquial writing and the classic literary forms of English.

3. **Listed below are a number of "can do" statements about a person's speaking ability in English. Please read each description carefully and indicate by circling the appropriate number in one of the three columns, whether you would be able - at the present time - to carry out this task "quite easily", "with some difficulty" or with great difficulty or not at all".**

Content	Quite easily	With some difficult	With great difficulty or not at all
Say the days of the week.	1	2	3
Count to 10 in English.	1	2	3
Give the current date (Month, day, year).	1	2	3
Order a simple meal in a restaurant.	1	2	3
Ask directions on the street.	1	2	3
Buy clothes in a department store.	1	2	3
Introduce myself in social situations, and use appropriate greetings and and leave-taking expressions.	1	2	3
Give simple biographical information about myself (place of birth, composition of family, early schooling, etc.).	1	2	3
Talk about my favourite hobby at some length, using appropriate vocabulary.	1	2	3
Describe my present job, studies, or other major life activities accurately and in detail.	1	2	3
Describe Canadian educational system in some detail.	1	2	3

Content	Quite easily	With some difficulty	With Great difficulty or not at all
Tell what I plan to be doing 5 years from now, using appropriate future tenses.	1	2	3
Describe the role played by the Canadian government.	1	2	3
State and support with examples and reasons a position on a controversial topic (for example; birth control, nuclear safety, environmental pollution).	1	2	3

4. Regardless of how well you currently speak English. Please answer each of the following in terms of your present level of listening comprehension in English:

Content	Quite easily	With some difficulty	With great difficulty or not at all
Understand very simple statements or questions in English ("Hello", "How are you?" "What is your name?" "Where do you live?", etc.).	1	2	3
In face-to-face conversation, understand a native speaker who is speaking slowly and carefully (i.e. deliberately adapting his or her speech to suit me).	1	2	3
In face-to-face conversation with a native speaker who is speaking slowly and carefully to me, tell whether the speaker is referring to past, present, or future events.	1	2	3
In face-to-face conversation, understand native speakers who are speaking to me as quickly and as colloquially as they would to another native speaker.	1	2	3
On the telephone, understand a native speaker who is speaking to me slowly and carefully (i.e. deliberately adapting his or her speech to suit me)	1	2	3
On the telephone, understand a native speaker who is talking as quickly and as colloquially as he or she would to a native speaker of English.	1	2	3
Understand two native speakers when they are talking rapidly with one another.	1	2	3

Content	Quite easily	With some difficulty	With great difficulty or not at all
Understand movies without subtitles.	1	2	3
Understand news broadcasts on the radio.	1	2	3
Understand train departure announcements and similar kinds of "public address system" announcements.	1	2	3
Understand the words of popular songs on the radio.	1	2	3
Understand play-by-play descriptions of sports events (for example, a soccer match) on the radio.	1	2	3

5. Please answer each of the following in terms of your present level of reading proficiency in English.

Content	Quite easily	With some difficulty	With great difficulty or not at all
Read, on store fronts, the type of store or the services provided (for example, "dry cleaning", "bookstore", "butcher", etc.	1	2	3
Read personal letters or notes written to me in which the writer has deliberately used simple words and construction.	1	2	3
Read personal letters and notes written as they would be to a native user of English.	1	2	3
Understand newspaper headlines.	1	2	3
Read and understand magazine articles at a level similar to those found in time or newsweek, without using a dictionary.	1	2	3
Read popular novels without using a dictionary.	1	2	3
Read a highly technical material in a particular academic or professional field with no use or only very in infrequent use of a dictionary.	1	2	3
Read newspaper "Wanted Ads" with comprehension, even when many abbreviation are used	1	2	3

6. **This question asks you to judge your own level of writing ability in English. Please read each of the six paragraphs below and decide which paragraph best describe your ability to write in English. Circle the number preceding only one of the paragraphs below:**

   a. I cannot really communicate any information in English through writing.

   b. I can write a few sentences in English using very basic vocabulary and structures.

   c. I can write relatively simple items (such as short note to a friend) that communicate basic messages but usually contain a considerable number of misspellings and/or grammatical errors.

   d. I can write fairly long personal letters, as well as uncomplicated business letters which convey meaning accurately and which contain relatively few errors, although they are completely idiomatic in expression.

   e. I can write complex personal and business letters, as well as many other kinds of documents (for example, a "letter to the editor" of local newspaper). Using in each case the particular vocabulary and style of expression appropriate to the particular writing situation. There is only an occasional hint that I am not a native writer of English.

   f. My writing, in all situation, cannot be distinguished from that of an educated native speaker.

下列問題用來判斷說英語的能力．請閱讀下列各段，并指出那段最恰如其分地表達您說英語的能力． 請如實地表達您的實際情況．

一．我說英語的能力只是限止在几個單詞上．在別人說得很慢的情況下，我听起也很困難．我几乎不能用英語來交流信息．

二．我能用英語對熟悉的話題進行提問和回答．如果別人說得很慢而且重復，我能聽懂簡單的提問以及陳述．我的詞彙只限止在基本的常用詞 (例如：食物，詢問方向，打招呼，等等)．我犯許多語法錯誤．但是，我的老師能聽懂我說的英語．我能在飯店裡點菜，在旅館裡要房間，在馬路上詢問方向以及作自我介紹．

三．我能和加拿大人介紹我自己的情況，我家的情況，我工作和學習的情況．對于時事新聞，在不太快的情況下，我能聽懂絕大多數．我的語法很不錯，但是在復雜的造句情況下，也要犯一些錯誤．在不能用某一特定的詞來表示某一個意思時，我通常能用其他較簡單的詞來表達．

四．我基本上能聽懂加拿大人說的英語．我的詞彙比較丰富，通常能聽懂絕大多數的內容和字．我的語法很不錯，所犯的錯誤基本上都是在復雜的句法上．我的發音比較清楚，但是還不十分完美．

五．我能聽懂加拿大人所講的話，不管他們說得多快，使用多麼復雜的詞和地方方言．我的詞彙很廣，甚至是技術性較強的詞匯，我也能比較精確流利地來表達．我很少犯語法錯誤．我的發音很好，但是還不十分完美．

六．我說的英語几乎和加拿大人一樣．

下列問題用來判斷英語寫作能力. 請閱讀下列六段, 並且指出那段最反映您的寫作能力.

一. 我不能用英語來寫作.

二. 我能用最基本的詞彙寫一些結構簡單的句子.

三. 我能用英語寫一些比較簡單的東西, 例如: 給朋友寫一張簡短的條子. 但是經常會有一些拼寫和語法上的錯誤.

四. 我能寫一些較長的個人書信和簡單的公務書信. 意思准確, 錯誤較少. 但是表達還不夠完美.

五. 我能用英語寫比較復雜的個人和公務書信以及許多其他文件, 例如: 給當地報刊編緝寫信. 在不同的情況下, 能用特別的詞彙和文法恰如其分地表達意思. 但是我有時候也會感到不滿意.

六. 不管在什麼情況下, 我的寫作和受過教育的加拿大人沒有什麼區別.

下面是一組 "您是否能做" 的句子. 請仔細閱讀下列各句, 然後圈出最反映您情況的選擇.

	容易	有點困難	非常困難或不能
a. 用英語説出星期一至星期日.	1	2	3
b. 用英語從一數到十.	1	2	3
c. 在飯店點一個簡單的菜單.	1	2	3
b. 在馬路上詢問方向.	1	2	3
e. 用英語説出年月日.	1	2	3
f. 在百貨商店購買衣服.	1	2	3
g. 在社交場所作自我介紹, 打招呼以及退場.	1	2	3
h. 用適當的詞彙講一些自己愛好的活動.	1	2	3
i. 准確詳細地交談工作學習以及其他主要日常活動.	1	2	3
j. 用將來時態表達自己五年後的計劃和打算.	1	2	3
k. 能詳細描述加拿大的教育制度.	1	2	3
l. 能描述議會在加拿大政府機構中的地位.	1	2	3
m. 用例子和理由對一個爭論的的題目中辯自己的觀點, 例如: 計劃生育, 鐳射安全, 環境污染.	1	2	3

無論您英語説得怎麼樣，請回答下列問題以便來判斷您的聽力

	容易	有點困難	非常困難或不能
a. 聽懂非常簡單的句子和提問，例如: 您好，您叫什麼名字? 您住在什麼地方? 等等.	1	2	3
b. 在面對面的情況下，如果加拿大人説得很慢，我能聽懂 (也就是説，能機械地聽).	1	2	3
c. 在面對面的情況下，如果加拿大人説得很慢很仔細，我能辯別過去，現在還是將來發生的事.	1	2	3
d. 在面對面的情況下，不管加拿大人説得多快，使用方言，或者加拿大人和加拿大人講話，我都能聽懂.	1	2	3
e. 在打電話時，如果加拿大人講得慢和仔細，我能聽懂.	1	2	3
f. 兩個加拿大人講話時，我也能聽懂.	1	2	3
g. 看懂沒有英文字母的電影.	1	2	3
h. 聽懂收音機所播放的新聞.	1	2	3

i. 聽懂火車時間的廣播以及類似的公共場所的廣播.	1	2	3
j. 聽懂收音機播放的流行歌曲.	1	2	3
k. 能聽懂收音機的體育現場廣播，例如：球賽.	1	2	3

請回答下列各段陳述以便來判斷您的閱讀能力

	容易	有點困難	非常困難或不能
a. 能閱讀商店門前陳列的商標來區分商店的類別和提供的服務項目.	1	2	3
b. 能閱讀詞彙和語法比較簡單的書信和筆記.	1	2	3
c. 能閱讀給加拿大人寫的書信和筆記.	1	2	3
d. 能理解報刊的標題.	1	2	3
e. 不用字典，能閱讀類似每周新聞和時代報等刊物.	1	2	3
f. 不用字典，能閱讀流行小說.	1	2	3
g. 不用或很少使用字典，能閱讀某一專業方面的高技術材料.	1	2	3
h. 能閱讀報上招工廣告，就是有許多縮寫也沒有問題.	1	2	3

下列問題用來判斷閱讀能力. 請閱讀下列六段並且指出那一段最能反映您的閱讀水平

一. 我几乎不能用英語來閱讀. 我只能看懂記住的几個單字.

二. 我能識別英語字母, 看懂常用的詞彙和音標. 我能讀一些人名, 地名, 路標以及商店名字, 數字, 孤立的單字或詞彙.

三. 我能看懂公務信件, 新聞以及比較熟悉的文章及大概意思. 但是要頻繁地用字典.

四. 我不用字典能基本看懂比較熟悉的大眾新聞報道, 日常信息交流以及技術方面的報道. 如果要看懂細節, 我要頻繁地用字典. 對一些比較復雜的句子以及縮寫時, 讀起來有點困難.

五. 我毫無困難地看懂比較熟悉的所有讀物以及面向大眾讀物, 而且很少使用字典.

六. 我能看懂比較抽象和難的讀物, 並且還能看懂帶有習語和古典文學的讀物.

APPENDIX TWO

RESPONDENTS' WRITING SAMPLES

WRITING SAMPLE FROM MR.A J:

It was a beautiful Saturday afternoon. There were rarely pieces of cloud floating in the blue sky. I stood still in front of the window and had the last glance to my dear motherland. The corps were ready to be cut, as they anxiously waved their heads and sang heavast songs. Birds were busy on storing food, as they searched carefully in the grasses. At the farside, stood the giganic huge buildings and TV tower. There, I had had fifteen wonderful years with my golden childhood memories.

The calling from my uncle woke me up. It also reminded me that I was going to leave this land to another unfamiliar continent. I followed my uncle to the custom checkpoint where I said Good bye to my hometown. I was a little bit sad, since I really missed my friends.

Sadness was soon replaced by excitement, as coming into my sight was a huge airplane. After I got on the plane, I found more interesting things. The chair was so soft and comfortable and it also can be used as a bed. The trip was wonderful. I could listen music, watch movie, or read books. I also saw the most beautiful "drawing" which was the morning sun raise above the clouds. However, I felt very uncomfortable when the plane took off, the only thing I could do at that time was to fasten the safty belt and pray. Anyway, I thought a lot about future and life. What was Canada, How would the school be - - - Most things was good, but I forgot to thing one terrible thing, that was I had to bead

another uncomfortness when the plane descended to the ground.
(287 words)

WRITING SAMPLE FROM MR. B:

To Canada:

In 1981 I planed to United States or Canada because they are among the best countries in the world. I started to study spoken English since it is impossible to live and work in those countries that people can not speak English. In 1983 I went to a school where I learned English everyday and tried to avoid to speak Chinese with people around me. Therefoe, I made a great progress. I could talk to a American or a candian withalittle difficulty. In 1986, I came to canada and worked in a labotory. At the begining, I understood what people in the lab said if they spoke not very fast or something I knew very well. But anyway I survived.
(124 words in total)

WRITING SAMPLE FROM MRS. B:

I have been in Canada about five years, I got here on Dec 26, 1987, from China. I deported in Paking of china and first landed in Vancouver of Canada, than I change the plane from Vancouver to Edmonton. Since I came to Edmonton I like this city very much because the climate is same as where I grow up at my homeland. Another reason I like here is that Edmonton's people more friendly than another place, Especially it is much better than the Unite States.

I think that Edmonton is best city for people to live, especial like us.

(108 words)

WRITING FROM MISS B:

First Ball Game:

As I got out of the truck, I saw Walt and jeff talking to the other team. As I stepped closer I heard the other team offering some juice before the game got started. Little did John's team mates known that this was a trick, the other team put food poisoning in the drink. John, Walt and jeff accepted the offer and then they went to the basement of the deserted school house.

I thought that it must have been me, but it was not. It was the drink the other kids had given to me that made me want to go the washroom. So i went to one of those new washrooms and compared them to the outhouse I had in my school. Just as I was looking the Spring Field kids pushed me in, locked me in, and said "good luck in winning the game my star player". They did the same things to Walt and jeff.

About an hour or so after stuck in the washroom, i really felt very desperate. I heard people shouting in my first room game. I swore that I would have done something to exchange place with Liza Murphy who i guessed was playing the right fielder. As I was thinking about this I felt that it was harder and harder to breath. It suddenly hit me that I was running out of air, now for the first time in my whole life and I got to feel what it was like to be stuck in a box and losing air very quickly.

Suddenly I remember that I brought a little knife with me just big enough to make the door open for me to crawl through, and, of course, it is easier for me because the door was wooden. I cut the door open and crawled through. I didn't have enough time to carve a hole for Walt or Jeff, but I thought that they were going to be okey after all this was the last inning of the game.

I run out to the field full of energy to win the last inning for me and my school, and I had to show something to those kids. The kids that locked me in gave me a funny look as I came to the field but I totally ignored them. My focus was the ball and the team.

It was a tie between us and the Spring Field kids, and Miss Simmons was cheering our team on. Our pitcher, pitched a fast one to the kid on bat. He hit with all his might and the ball was coming to me as fast as thunder. I knew that it was up to me to catch the ball and win the game for out team. I jumped up feeling as air and, caught the ball.

The crowed went wild,(actually it was just my teammates and Miss Simmons) they picked me up on their shoulder and carried me

home on their shoulders. if you looked at my face you could have seen that it was full of pride and happiness, thinking that I must have showed those kids something. But what I remembered the most was Miss Simmons said" That is what good sportsmanship is all about kiddo"
(553 words)

WRITING SAMPLE FROM MR.A S:

On September 17, 1987, One DC-17 jet carried me to Canada. About 10 am, the plane touched down the Vancouver International Airport. After passing the custom check and immigration registration, I walked out the airport building. My brother met me at the gate. he had waited for me about a hours. From Shanghai to Vancouver, it took me only 9 hours, the fast modern transpoctation makes the globe smaller than ever before. My brother drove me to his home. When I got his apartment, I felt I came back home again. I recieved warmly welcome. I spent about 2 days with my brother's family in Victoria B.C. Victoria is a beautiful city in Canada. Nice view and comfortable weather is the feature of the city.

On September 20, I came to Edmonton. Dr Nancy Kerr met me at International Airport. She sent me to the Chinese Student Association in the HUB Mall.

The next day, I went to University. There are only 5 graduate students in Faculty of Home Economics. Jean Lang is another students from China. She helped me open an account in CIBC and found a basement to stay. My house is not far away from the University. I went to school by bike, it only took me 10 minutes.

(221 words)